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Stories by American Authors.

III.

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Frances Hodgson Burnett

W.F.C.
S.E. 34A
Stories by

American Authors

III.

THE SPIDER'S EYE.

By LUCRETIA P. HALE.

A STORY OF THE LATIN QUARTER.

By FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

TWO PURSE-COMPANIONS.

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By DAVID D. LLOYD.

A MEMORABLE MURDER.

By CELIA THAXTER.

VENETIAN GLASS.

By BRANDER MATTHEWS.

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THE SPIDER'S EYE.

By LUCRETIA P. HALE.

THERE are whispering galleries, where, if the ear is placed in a certain position, it takes in the sound of the lowest whisper from the opposite side of the room. But, to produce this effect, the architecture of the apartment must be of a peculiar nature, and, especially, the rules and laws of sound must be observed.

I have often thought that, were one wise enough, there might be found, in every room, a centre to which all sound must converge. Nay, that perhaps such a focus had already been discovered by some one who has wished to appear wiser than his neighbors, who has made use of some hitherto unknown scientific fact, and has on any one occasion, or on many occasions, thus made himself the centre of information.

These ideas occurred to my mind when I arrived the other night early at the theatre, and was for a

time, literally, the only occupant of the house. I fell to marvelling at the skill of the architect who has been so successful in the acoustic arrangements of this theatre. Not a sound, so it is said, is lost from the stage upon any part of the house. The lowest sob of a dying heroine, in her very last agony, is heard as plainly by the occupant of the back seat of the amphitheatre, as are the thundering denunciations of the tragic actor in the wildest of gladiatorial scenes.

I wondered if this were one of those rules that worked both ways ; if the stage performer, in a moment of silent by-play, could hear the sentimental whisper of the belle in the box opposite, as well as the noisy applause of the claqueur in the front seat. If so, the audience might become, to him, the peopled stage, filled with the varied and incongruous characters.

Then if art can produce such effects upon what we call an ethereal substance—if the waves of air can be compelled to carry their message only in the directions in which it is taught to go—what influence would such power have on more spiritual media ? In other worlds, where it is not necessary for thoughts to express themselves in words, but where some more subtle power than that of air conveys ideas from one being to another, it is possible that an inquiring being might place himself at some central point where he might gather in all the information that is afloat in such a spiritual existence.

Full of these thoughts, and my head, perhaps, a little bewildered by them, I passed unobserved into the orchestra, and ensconced myself in a little niche under the music-desk of the leader. I was surprised to find myself in a little cavity, from which there were loop-holes of observation into every part of the house, while there was a front view of the stage when the curtain should be raised. Seduced by the comfort of this little nook, and my speculations not being of the liveliest nature, it is not to be wondered at that I fell into a gentle sleep.

I was aroused presently by the baton of the leader, struck with some force upon the desk over my head. I was aware, at the same time, of a whispering all around my ears, and an incessant noise, like that of aspen leaves in a summer breeze, which, in spite of its softness and delicacy, overpowered the sound of the loud orchestra. When I was able to recover myself, I began to find that I had indeed placed myself in the centre of the house; not in the centre of sound, but, if I may so express myself, of sensation. I was not listening to the conversations, but suddenly found myself the confidant of the thoughts of all the occupants of this well-filled house. I was lost in the multiplicity of ideas that were poured in upon me, and endeavored to concentrate myself upon one series of thoughts. I looked through my loop-holes, and presently selected one group towards which I might direct the opera-glass of my mental observation.

There sat the five Misses Seymour. We had always distinguished them as the tall one, the light-haired one, the one who painted in oils, the one who had been south, and the little one whom nobody knew anything about. This individuality had been our only guide after having engaged Miss Seymour for a dance, and this was sufficient. The one who painted in oils always refused to dance; the one who had been south spoke with an accent, and said "*chick'n*" and "*fush*," if the conversation turned upon the bill of fare; and the others were distinguished by their personal appearance.

Now I felt anxious to discover more certainly which was which. I found, presently, that instead of contenting myself with the superficial layer of thought over my mind, created by the circumstances in which they were placed, I was penetrating into what they really were. A few minutes showed me what had been their occupations for the day, and what were their plans for the next. I saw, at once, all their regrets and ambitions.

It had been the day of Mrs. Jay's famous *matinée*. I had not been at the reception, but Frank Leslie had told me all about it, and that all the Seymours were there; and about Miss Seymour's fainting. I knew Frank was in love with one of the Miss Seymours, but I never had found out which, and I was not sure that Frank himself knew.

How suddenly did these five characters, whom before I had found it difficult to distinguish, stand out now with differing features. I saw Aurelia—

that was the tall one—enter the drawing-room very stately in her beauty. No wonder that every one had turned round to look at her ; to admire her first, and then criticise her, because she seemed so cold and statue-like. But to-night she was going over the whole scene in her thoughts. I heard the throbbing of her heart as in memory she was bringing back the morning's events. She had refused to dance, because she was sure she should not have the strength to go through a polka. She had preferred to sink into a seat by the conservatory, and upheld by the excitement of the music to await the meeting.

Oh ! in this everyday world, where its repeated succession of events is gone through with in composure, how easy it is to control the wildest passions. A conventional smile and a stiff bow are the draperies that veil the intensest unspoken emotions. It was under this disguise that Miss Seymour was to greet Gerald Lawson. He went to Canton three years ago, and before he went she had promised to marry him. She promised one gay evening after "the German." She had been carried away by the moment. Ever since, all through the three years, she had been regretting it. It was a secret engagement. The untold feeling that had prompted it had never been aired, and died very soon for want of earth and light. To cold indifference for the man to whom she had promised herself, had succeeded an absolute aversion. What was worse, she loved another person.

Aurelia Seymour loved Frank ! This very morning the news had reached her that the Kumshan was in from Canton. The passengers had arrived last night ; she was to meet Gerald at Mrs. Jay's this morning.

Frank Leslie seated himself by her. She was in the midst of a calm, cool conversation with him, when she saw a little commotion in the other corner of the room. Every one was greeting Mr. Lawson on his arriving home. He is making his way through the crowd ; he comes to her, he bows ; Aurelia smiles.

But this was not all. He asked her if she would come into the conservatory. She had accompanied him there. Half hid by the branches of a camellia-tree all covered with white blossoms, she had said coldly, "Gerald, I cannot marry you." But Gerald had not received the word so coolly. He had burst out into passion. First he had exclaimed in wonder, next he could not believe her.

"Would she treat him so ungenerously ? Was she a heartless flirt, a mere coquette ?"

He told over his love that had been growing warmer all these three years ; of his ambition that was to be crowned by her approval ; of his lately gained wealth, valued only for her sake. Passionate words they were, and full of intense feeling ; but hidden by the camellia, restrained and kept under from fear of observers. They were frequently interrupted, too.

"Thank you—ninety-nine days ; very quick pas-

sage. Yes, I go back next week ; no, I stay at home," were, with other sentences, thrown in, as answers to the different questions of those who did not know what they were interrupting.

But, at last, Aurelia broke away. Broke away ! No ; she accepted Middleton's proposal to go into the coffee-room, and left Gerald beneath the camellia.

As I watched her from my loop-holes I could tell that Aurelia was going over all this scene in her mind. While her eyes were fixed upon the stage, she recalled every word and gesture of Gerald's. Yet, his reproaches, his just complaints, hardly weighed upon her now. She was looking on the vacant seat beside her, and wondering when Frank would come to take it.

But "Lilly," the light-haired one, her thoughts were rushing back to the wild, gay polkas of the morning. Now by Aurelia's side, now away again ; she had danced continually till the last moment, and when they came to tell her the carriage was ready, and she must come away, she had fainted.

It was as she was going up stairs into the drawing-room, just before she and her sisters made their grand entrée, that Lilly had heard that "Cousin Joe" had not come home in the vessel with Gerald Lawson. He had gone to Europe by the overland route, and wild, mad fellow that he was, had determined to join the Russian troops in the Crimea.

"And be shot there for his pains," Frank Leslie added carelessly.

Cousin Joe hadn't come home ! He didn't care to come home ! He was going to be shot !

She could think of nothing else. She could not keep still ; she could not talk placidly like the rest ; she must dance, and dance wildly and passionately.

But a moment of reaction came. When the last strain of music had died away, all power of self-control had died away, too. No wonder that she had fainted ! More wonder that she could recover herself ; could resist her mother's entreaties, after all that dancing, to spare herself and stay from the opera.

Here she was, outwardly lively and radiant, chatting with Lieutenant Preston, inwardly chafed at all this constraint, and wondering how it was Cousin Joe could stay so long away.

By her side sat Annette. It was the report that she had been sent south last winter to break up a desperate flirtation she was carrying on. However it was, I had always fancied Annette more than either of the other sisters. She had apparently less of our northern reserve, whether for good or evil, than the rest. She said just what she was thinking ; danced when she liked ; was insolent when she pleased.

To-night she seemed to me fretful. She was angry with Lilly for talking with Lieutenant Preston ; and, indeed, I must not, in honor, reveal all I

read in Annette's mind. If I found there her opinion of me ; if, on the whole, it lowered my opinion of myself, I must take refuge in the old proverb, "Eavesdroppers never hear any good of themselves."

But there was Angelina ; she was the one who "painted in oils," and she attracted me more than any of the others. There was about her an atmosphere of pleasure, within her an expression of delight, that accounted for the really sunny gleam upon her face. Something had made all the day happy for her. In the morning she had passed nearly all the time in Mrs. Jay's front drawing-room. The fine masterpieces of art, brought from Europe, make this apartment a true picture-gallery. But Angelina's pleasure, artist though she was, was not taken from the figures upon the walls. She walked up and down the room ; she lingered awhile in one of the deep fauteuils ; she paused before the paintings with Frank Leslie by her side. As she turned, at the theatre, now and then to the vacant seat behind her, next Aurelia's, her anticipation was not embittered by anxiety ; she knew he would come in time. Oh, Frank ! you did not tell me *all* that took place at Mrs. Jay's !

But, from all these observations, my thoughts were turned back to the stage by the influence of the little Sophie Seymour. She—about whom we knew nothing—she was the only one of the party entirely absorbed in the opera. Her eyes fixed

upon the stage ; her heart wrapt up in the intense story that was being enacted ; her musical soul throbbing with the glorious chords that swelled out ; her whole being reflected the opera.

So I turned me to the stage. My eyes fell first upon the substitute that the illness of Mademoiselle — required for the night. Just now she was standing on one side, and as she drew her white glove closer, *her* thoughts were going back to the scenes of the day.

Oh ! what a little room she lived in ! She was sitting in it when the message came from the manager to summon her to sing to-night ! Her brother Frank was copying some music by her side ; and now she is smiling at the recollection of the conversation that had followed upon her accepting the manager's unexpected proposal.

She had hastened to get out her last concert dress. It was new once—but oh ! would it answer now for the opera ?

Those very white kid gloves ! They had cost her her dinner.

“ Must I have new ones, Franz ? ” she had asked. “ If there were only time to have an old pair cleaned—if, indeed, I have any left worth cleaning ! ”

“ Never mind,” answered Franz, “ it is worth twenty dinners to have you hear the opera. I have longed so every night to have you there, and to have you on the stage ! my highest wishes are granted. Oh ! Marie, when you make a great

point, I shall have to take my flute from my mouth and cry bravo !”

“ Oh, don’t speak of the singing. It takes away my breath to think of myself upon the stage ! How I waste my time over dress and gloves ! I must practice ; I must be ready for the rehearsal.”

“ My poor Marie ! To-day, of all days, to go without dinner.”

“ Don’t think of it ! When the manager ‘ pays up,’ oh, then, Franz ! we’ll have dinners. Only part of the money must go to a new concert dress. When my last was new, I overheard, as I left the stage, a young girl saying, to her sister, I suppose, ‘ What an elegant dress !’ I wanted to stop and ask her if she thought it were worth going without meat for a month.”

And as Marie recalled these words to-night to her mind, I saw her look up and smile as she glanced over the house, and contrasted the showy dress she wore with the poor home she had left behind.

What a poor home it was, indeed ! What a contrast did the gay dress she arranged for the evening make with her room’s poor adorning. The dress she thrust quickly away, and had devoted herself to the study of the music for evening. With her brother’s assistance, she had prepared herself for the rehearsal, and had gone there with him.

The rehearsal was more alarming to her than the thought of the evening performance. There were

the conductor's criticising eyes glaring at her ; the unsympathizing glances of some of her stage companions—though many of them had come to her with words of kindly encouragement ; there was the silent, untenanted expanse of the theatre before her—none of the excitement of stage scenery, or the brilliancy of light and tinsel ; and she must force herself to think of her part, as a technical study of music, all the time she felt she was undergoing a severe criticism from Mademoiselle ——'s friends, who were comparing the new-comer's voice with that of their own ally.

But her thoughts were not sad. There was in her a gayety and strength of spirit that bore her up. The brilliant scene gave her an excitement that helped her to bear the thought of her everyday trials. It had been hard to work all day, preparing for the evening—hard for the mind and body—and she had lately lived on poor fare, and wanted the exercise upon which her physical constitution should support itself. At once these troubles were forgotten. Now was to come the duet with the prima donna.

No timidity restrained her now. She felt, at the moment, that her own voice was of worth only as it harmonized with the leading one. She forgot herself when she thought of that wonderful voice, when once she found her own mingled in its wonderful tones. Now she was supported by it through the whole piece ; her own was subdued by it, and at last she felt herself inspired by it ; it was

no longer herself singing ; she was carried away by the power of another, and lifted above herself.

All applauded the magnificent music and harmony ; the *bravo* of Franz was for Marie alone.

At this time my interest was absorbed in my observation of the prima donna. I had perceived at first how indifferently she had entered upon the spirit of the music. Her companion had filled her mind with the meaning of its composer, and was striving to infuse into herself the interpretation that the prima donna would give to its glorious strains.

But the soul of the prima donna was away. It was in a heavily-curtained room, where there were luxury and elegance. Here she had all day been watching by the bedside of her sick child. She had collected round it everything that money could bring to soothe its sufferings. There were flowers in the greatest profusion ; these were trophies of her last night's success ; and on the table by the bedside she had heaped up her brilliant, gorgeous jewels, for their varied and glowing colors had served to amuse the child for a few minutes. She had sung to him music, that crowds would have collected to hear, had they been allowed. Only to soothe him, all the golden tones of her voice had poured out—now dropping in thrilling, sad melody, now in glad, happy, childish strains.

Nothing through the day could put to rest that one appeal, which now was echoing in her ears : “ Will nothing cool my throat !—my head burns !

—only a few drops of water !” Over all the tones of the orchestra these words sounded and thrilled so in her ears, that only mechanically could the prima donna repeat the tones that were thrilling all the hearts to which they came.

At last the power of her own voice conquered herself, too. In the closing cadences—in those chords, triumphant and faith-bringing—for the moment her own sorrows melted away, and the thought of herself was lost in the inspiration of the grand, majestic intonations to which she was giving utterance. She was no longer a suffering woman ; but her soul and her voice were sounding beneath the touch of a great master-spirit, and giving out a glowing music, compelled by its master-power.

What an enthusiasm ! what an excitement ! As with the opera-singer on the stage, so with all the audience ; all separate joy and grief, all individual passions were swallowed up, and carried away by this all-absorbing inspiration, and lost in its mighty whirl.

For me, now, there was but one character to follow. How grandly the stage-heroine went through her part ! As if to crush all other emotion, she flung herself into the character she was portraying, and went through it wildly and passionately.

She overshadowed her little rival—for Marie was her rival, according to the plot of the opera—now threatening, now protecting her, as she was led on by the spirit of the play. Marie shrunk before her, or was inspired by her ; and her delicate, en-

treating figure helped the pathos of her voice. Marie, by this time, had utterly lost herself in her admiration of the great genius who was so impressing her. She gave out her own voice as an offering to this great power. For its sake she would have found it impossible to make any mistake in her own singing, or do anything with her own voice, but just place it at the service of her companion, as a foil to her grand and glorious one.

When in the play the heroine gave up—as she does in the play—her own life for the sake of her rival, the act became more magnanimous and wondrous as being performed for this little delicate Marie, who shrank from so great a sacrifice.

The prima donna gained all the applause. Indeed, it was right—for it was her power that had called out all that was great in her delicate rival. It was she who had inspired her, and made her forget herself and everything but the notes she must give out, true and pure.

They were both called before the stage after the grand closing scene; or rather the prima donna drew forward the retiring Marie. Shouts and peals of enthusiasm greeted the queen of song. But her moment of exaltation had passed away. Over and over again she was repeating to herself, “Will they never let me go home? Perhaps he is dying now—he wants me—I am too late!”

She was at the summit of her greatness; but oh! it was painful to see her there—to see how she would have hushed all those wild, enthusiastic

shouts for the sake of one fresh childish tone ; how she would have exchanged all those bursts of passion to make sure of a healthy throb in that child's pulse. All this enthusiasm was not new to her. It was part of her existence. It was a restraint upon her now, but she could not have done without it. It was the excitement which would serve to sustain her through another night of watching.

Marie, too, was giving her meed of praise, as she followed her across the stage. She did not think of taking to herself one shout of the enthusiasm, any more than she would have thought of appropriating one flower from the bouquets which were showered before her. There was, indeed, one share of the plaudits which belonged to her entirely. This came from Franz—for I recognized him by his unruly stamping, and unrestrained applause. His thoughts were only for Marie ; he was filled with pride at the manner in which she bore herself—at her simple carriage, and modest demeanor. His praise was all for Marie. The famous opera-singer, whom he had heard night after night, was forgotten, in his pride for his little sister.

I sank back into my niche. Varied figures floated before me, and bewildered me.

I have often looked at spiders with deep interest. It is said that their eyes are made up of many faces. What a bewildering world, then, is presented to their view ! It is no wonder that, as I have seen them, they have appeared so irresolute in their

motions, darting here and there. A world of so many faces stand around the spider, towards which shall he turn his attention? He lives, as it were, in the middle of a kaleidoscope, where many figures are repeated, and form one great figure, and each separate section is like its neighbor. Which of these varied yet too similar pictures shall he choose?

At least this is my idea of the sensations of a spider; but I am not enough of a naturalist to say that it is correct. How is it? When a fly enters that web, which is divided into a symmetry similar to that of the faces of a spider's eye, does mine host, the spider, see twenty-five thousand similar flies approaching, his organ of vision standing as the centre? What a cosmorama there is before him! What a luxurious repast might not his imagination offer him, if his memory did not recall the plain truth that dull reality has so often disclosed to him! We cannot wonder that the spider should lead, apparently, so solitary a life, since his eyes have the power of producing a whole ball-room from the form of one lady visitor. Not one, but twenty-five thousand Robert Bruces inspired the Scottish spider to that homely instance of perseverance, which served for an example for a king. As he hangs his drapery from one cornice to another, the prismatic scenes that come before him serve to lengthen that life which might seem to be cut off before its time. It is not one, but twenty-five thousand brooms which advance to destroy his

airy home ; to invade his household gods, and bring to the ground that row of bluebottles which his magnifying power of vision has transformed from one to twenty-five thousand ! nay, more, perhaps !

Out in the air, as he swings his delicate cordage from one tree to another, he does not need to wear a gorgeous plumage ; this old dusty coat and uncomely figure, that make a child shrink and cry out, these may well be forgotten by him who looks into life through prismatic glasses. Every drop of rain wears for him its Iris drapery ; the dew on the flowers becomes a jewelled circlet ; and the dazzling pictures brought by the sunbeams outshine and transform for him his own dusky garment.

I thought of my friend, the spider, as into my web of thought came such numerous images. They were not alike in form—and so were more distracting. More than I can mention or number had visited me there ; had excited my interest for a moment, and been crowded out by another new image. Yes, it was like looking into a kaleidoscope where there were infinite repetitions. In all were the same master-colors and forms. All were swayed by passions that made an under-current beneath a great outward calm. All were wearing an outward form that strove each to resemble the other ; not to appear strange or odd. So they flitted before me, coming into shape, and departing from it as they came within and left my reach.

I only roused myself to see the various charac-

ters, that had presented themselves on the stage of my mind, return again into their everyday costumes. They passed out of the focus of my observation into their several forms in which they walk through common life. Putting on their opera-cloaks, their paletots, they put on, for me, that mark that hides the inner life, and the veil that conceals all hidden passions.

It is said that there is, no longer, romance in real life. But the truth is that we live the romance that former ages told and sang. The magic carpet of the Arabian tales, the mirror that brought to view most distant objects, have come out of poetry, and present themselves in the prosaic form of steam locomotive and the electric telegraph.

Nowadays, everybody has travelled to some distant land, has seen, with everybody's eyes, the charmed isles and lotos shores that used to be only in books. In this lively, changing age everybody is living his own romance. And this is why the romance of story grows pale and is thrown aside. A domestic sketch of everyday life, of outward calm and simplicity, soothes the unrest of active life, and charms more than three volumes of wild incident that cannot equal the excitement that every reader is enacting in his own drama.

There were as many romances in life around me, that night, as there were persons in the theatre. I had not merely learned that the cold Aurelia was passionately in love, that the gay Lilly was broken-

hearted, that the frank Annette was silly, and Angelina and Frank engaged before it was out. Beside all this, I had learned the trials and joys of many others whom I know only in this way ; and I left the theatre the last, as I had come in the first.

The next morning I returned to business affairs again. It was a particularly pressing morning. The steamer was in. I had not even time to think of my last night's experiences. Only at the corner of a street I met an acquaintance, whose smiling face amazed me. I knew that all last evening his mind had been preoccupied with the truly critical state of his affairs, and I was at a loss how to greet him. He hurried away from my embarrassment. I had more than one of these encounters ; but it was not till the labors of the day were over that I understood how my knowledge of mankind had been lately increased. I went, in the evening, to a small party where I knew I should meet the Seymours. I fell in there with Aurelia first. She was as cold and as stately as ever. I entered into conversation with her, feeling that I could touch the key-note of her life. But no ; she was as chilling to me as ever ; nothing warmed her—nothing elicited from her the slightest spark. Sometimes she looked at me a little wonderingly, as if I were talking in some style unusual to me ; as if my remarks were, in a manner, impertinent ; but, in the end, I left her to her icy coldness.

As for Lilly, she appeared to the world, in general, as gay as ever. I fancied I detected a slight

listlessness as she accompanied her partner into the dancing-room for the sixth polka. It was no great help with me in talking to Annette, that I knew she was a fool. I won no thanks from Frank or Angelina when I manœuvred that they should have a little flirtation in the library. For some reason they were determined that their engagement should not be apparent, and I was reproached afterwards by Frank for my clumsiness, and received, in return, no confidences to make up for the reproach.

On the whole I passed a disagreeable evening. I had a feeling all the time that I was in the presence of smothered volcanoes, and a consciousness that I had the advantage of the rest of the world in knowing all its secret history. This became, at last, almost insupportable.

There was no opera this night. The next day it was announced that Mademoiselle — would take her accustomed place in the performance. I went early to the theatre, and found, to my amazement, there had been some changes made in the orchestra; the prompter's box had been enlarged, and my newly-discovered niche had been rendered inaccessible and almost entirely filled in! In vain did I attempt to find some other position that might correspond to it. I only attracted the attention of the early comers to the theatre. I was obliged to return to my old position of an outside observer of life, and see, quite unoccupied, that centre of all observation which I had enjoyed my-

self so much two nights before ; over which the leader of the orchestra was unconsciously waving his baton.

I made some inquiries for Marie. One day I went down the quiet, secluded street, where they told me she lived. I walked up and down before the house. It was very tantalizing to feel that I had no excuse for approaching her. Of all the figures that had assembled around me that night, hers had remained the most distinct upon my memory. For, through the whole, she had retained an outward bearing which had corresponded with what I could see of her inward self. Even when she threw herself most earnestly into her part, she had scarcely seemed to lose herself. She had always remained a simple, self-devoted girl.

I longed to see more of her. I wanted to see her in that quiet home. While I was wandering up and down, I abused the forms of society which would make my beginning an acquaintance with her so difficult. I saw Franz, brother Franz, the flute-player, leave the house. Scarcely conscious of what I was doing, I went, as soon as he had left the street, to the door which was open to all comers ; to the house which contained more than one family. I made my way up stairs and knocked at a door to which Franz's card was attached.

It was opened by Marie. She stood before me with a handkerchief tied over her head, and a broom in her hand, but she looked, to me, as beautiful as she had done behind the glare of the foot-

lights. Her simplicity was here even more fascinating.

She held the door partly open, while I, to recover myself, asked for Franz. She told me he was gone out, but would return soon, if I would wait for him. I was never less anxious to see any person than then to see Franz, but I could not resist entering the room, and this, in spite of the apologetic air of Marie. The room looked as neat as I had imagined it, seeing it from the mirror of Marie's mind. I should say it scarcely needed that broom which still remained expectantly in Marie's hand. A piano, spider-legged, in the number and thinness of these supports, stood at one side of the room, weighed down with classic-looking music. A bouquet, that had been given by the hand of the prima donna to Marie, stood upon the piano.

Otherwise it was a common enough looking room. Some remark being necessary, I inquired of Franz's health, and hoped he was not wearing himself out with hard work ; I had seen him regularly at the opera. Marie encouraged me with regard to her brother's health, and still, the opera even did not serve to open a conversation with Marie.

Then, indeed, did I wish that I was the hero of a novel. I might have told her I was writing an opera, and have asked her to study for its heroine. I might have retired, and sent her, directly and mysteriously, a grand piano of the very grandest

scale. Or, I might have asked her to sit down to that old-fashioned instrument, and have asked her to let me hear her sing, for my nieces were in need of a new teacher. I might have engaged Franz, with promise of a high salary, to write me the music of songs, or a new sonata. But I had neither the salary nor the nieces. I had not even an excuse for standing there. It was very foolish of me, but I could not help feeling that it was exceedingly impertinent of me to be there.

Instead of informing Marie that I was intimately acquainted with her, that I had shared every emotion of her soul, on the exciting opera night, I stated that I could call again upon brother Franz. I regretted, at the same time, that I had not my card, and left the room with a courteous bow of dismissal from Marie.

I have walked that way very often. Once or twice I have seen Marie at the window, when she has not seen me. But I have not attempted to visit her again. Of what use is it for me, then, to have such a knowledge of her, when she does not have a similar one sympathetic with me? She has not sung in public of late, and I do not know the reason why she has not.

My friends are fond of asking me why I, every night, sit in a different place at the theatre; and why I have such a fancy for a seat in the midst of the trumpets of the orchestra, and directly under the leader. I am striving to make new acoustic discoveries.

But I dare not state in what theatre it is that my point of observation can be found, nor ask of the management to make an alteration in the position of the orchestra, lest some night I should be observed, and expose all the secrets of my breast to a less confidential observer.

A STORY OF THE LATIN QUARTER.

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

“**H**E is one of the Americans,” his fellow *lo-cataires* said among themselves. “Poor and alone and in bad health. A queer fellow.”

Having made this reply to those who questioned them, they were in the habit of dismissing the subject lightly. After all, it was nothing to them, since he had never joined their circle.

They were a gay, good-natured lot, and made a point of regarding life as airily as possible, and taking each day as it came with fantastic good cheer. The house—which stood in one of the shabbiest corners of the Latin Quarter—was full of them from floor to garret—artists, students, models, French, English, Americans, living all of them merrily, by no means the most regular of lives. But there were good friends among them ; their world was their own, and they found plenty of

sympathy in their loves and quarrels, their luck and ill-luck. Upon the whole there was more ill-luck than luck. Lucky men did not choose for their head-quarters such places as this rather dilapidated building,—they could afford to go elsewhere, to places where the Quarter was better, where the stairs were less rickety, the passages less dark, and the *concierge* not given to chronic intoxication. Here came the unlucky ones, whose ill-luck was of various orders and degrees : the young ones who were some day to paint pictures which would be seen in the Palais de l'Industrie and would be greeted with acclamations by an appreciative public ; the older ones who had painted pictures which had been seen at the Palais de l'Industrie and had not been appreciated at all ; the poets whose sonnets were of too subtle an order to reach the common herd ; the students who had lived beyond the means allowed them by their highly respectable families, and who were consequently somewhat off color in the eyes of the respectable families in question—these and others of the same class, all more or less poor, more or less out at elbows, and more or less in debt. And yet, as I have said, they lived gayly. They painted, and admired or criticised each other's pictures ; they lent and borrowed with equal freedom ; they bemoaned their wrongs loudly, and sang and laughed more loudly still as the mood seized them ; and any special ill-fortune befalling one of their number generally aroused a display of sympathy

which, though it might not last long, was always a source of consolation to the luckless one.

But the American, notwithstanding he had been in the house for months, had never become one of them. He had been seen in the early spring going up the stairway to his room, which was a mere garret on the sixth story, and it had been expected among them that in a day or so he would present himself for inspection. But this he did not do, and when he encountered any of their number in his out-goings or in-comings he returned their greetings gently in imperfect French. He spoke slowly and with difficulty, but there was no coldness in his voice or manners, and yet none got much further than the greeting.

He was a young fellow, scarcely of middle height, frail in figure, hollow-chested, and with a gentle face and soft, deeply set dark eyes. That he worked hard and lived barely it was easy enough to discover. Part of each day he spent in the various art galleries, and after his return from these visits he was seen no more until the following morning.

"Until the last ray of light disappears he is at his easel," said a young student whom a gay escapade had temporarily banished to the fifth floor. "I hear him move now and then and cough. He has a villainous cough."

"He is one of the enthusiasts," said another. "One can read it in his face. What fools they are—these enthusiasts! They throw away life that a crown of laurel may be laid upon their coffins."

In the summer some of them managed to leave Paris, and the rest had enough to do to organize their little excursions and make the best of the sunshine, shade and warmth. But when those who had been away returned and all settled down for the winter, they found the "American," as they called him, in his old place. He had not been away at all; he had worked as hard as ever through midsummer heat and autumn rain; he was frailer in figure, his clothes were more worn, his face was thinner and his eyes far too hollow and bright, but he did not look either discouraged or unhappy.

"How does he live?" exclaimed the *concierge* dramatically. "The good God knows! He eats nothing, he has no fire, he wears the clothing of midsummer—he paints—he paints—he paints! Perhaps that is enough for him. It would not be for me."

At this time—just as the winter entered with bleak winds and rains and falls of powdery snow—there presented herself among them an arrival whose appearance created a sensation.

One night on his way upstairs, the American found himself confronted on the fourth floor by a flood of light streaming through the open door of a before unoccupied room. It was a small room, meagerly furnished, but there was a fire in it and half a dozen people who laughed and talked at the top of their voices. Five of them were men he had seen before,—artists who lived in the house,—

but the sixth was a woman whom he had never seen and whose marvellous beauty held him spell-bound where he stood.

She was a woman of twenty-two or three, with an oval face whose fairness was the fairness of ivory. She was dark-eyed and low-browed, and as she leaned forward upon the table and looked up at the man who spoke to her, even the bright glow of the lamp, which burned directly before her face, showed no flaw in either tint or outline.

"Why should we ask the reason of your return?" said the man. "Let us rejoice that you are here."

"I will tell you the reason," she answered, without lowering her eyes. "I was tired."

"A good reason," was the reply.

She pushed her chair back and stood upright; her hands hung at her side; the men were all looking at her; she smiled down at them with fine irony.

"Who among you wishes to paint me?" she said. "I am again at your service, and I am not less handsome than I was."

Then there arose among them a little rapturous murmur, and somehow it broke the spell which had rested upon the man outside. He started, shivered slightly and turned away. He went up to the bare coldness of his own room and sat down, forgetting that it was either cold or bare. Suddenly, as he had looked at the woman's upturned face, a great longing had seized upon him.

"I should like to paint you—I," he found him-

self saying to the silence about him. "If I might paint you!"

He heard the next day who she was. The *concierge* was ready enough to give him more information than he had asked.

"Mademoiselle Natalie, Monsieur means," he said; "a handsome girl that; a celebrated model. They all know her. Her face has been the foundation of more than one great picture. There are not many like her. One model has this beauty—another that; but she, *mon Dieu*, she has all. A great creature, Mademoiselle."

Afterward, as the days went by, he found that she sat often to the other artists. Sometimes he saw her as she went to their rooms or came away; sometimes he caught a glimpse of her as he passed her open door, and each time there stirred afresh within him the longing he had felt at first. So it came about that one afternoon, as she came out of a studio in which she had been giving a sitting, she found waiting outside for her the thinly clad, frail figure of the American. He made an eager yet hesitant step forward, and began to speak awkwardly in French.

She stopped him.

"Speak English," she said, "I know it well."

"Thank you," he answered simply, "that is a great relief. My French is so bad. I am here to ask a great favor from you, and I am sure I could not ask it well in French."

"What is the favor?" she inquired, looking at him with some wonder.

He was a new type to her, with his quiet directness of speech and his gentle manner.

"I have heard that you are a professional model," he replied, "and I have wished very much to paint what—what I see in your face. I have wished it from the first hour I saw you. The desire haunts me. But I am a very poor man; I have almost nothing; I cannot pay you what the rest do. To-day I came to the desperate resolve that I would throw myself upon your mercy—that I would ask you to sit to me, and wait until better fortune comes."

She stood still a moment and gazed at him.

"Monsieur," she said at length, "are you so poor as that?"

He colored a little, but it was not as if with shame.

"Yes," he answered, "I am very poor. I have asked a great deal of you, have I not?"

She gave him still another long look.

"No," she said, "I will come to you to-morrow, if you will direct me to your room."

"It is on the sixth floor," he replied; "the highest of all. It is a bare little place."

"I will come," she said, and was turning away when he stopped her.

"I—I should like to tell you how grateful I am—" he began.

"There is no need," she responded with bitter lightness. "You will pay me some day—when you are a great artist." But when she reached the next

landing she glanced down and saw that he still stood beneath watching her.

The next day she kept her word and went to him. She found his room poorer and barer even than she had fancied it might be. The ceiling was low and slanting ; in one corner stood a narrow iron bedstead, in another a wooden table ; in the best light the small window gave his easel was placed with a chair before it.

When he had opened the door in answer to her summons, and she saw all this, she glanced quickly at his face to see if there was any shade of confusion upon it, but there was none. He appeared only rejoiced and eager.

"I felt sure it was you," he said.

"Were you then so sure that I would come?" she asked.

"You said you would," he answered. He placed her as he wished to paint her, and then sat down to his work. In a few moments he was completely absorbed in it. For a long time he did not speak at all. The utter silence which reigned—a silence which was not only a suspension of speech but a suspension of any other thought beyond his task—was a new experience to her. His cheek flushed, his eyes burned dark and bright ; it seemed as if he scarcely breathed. When he turned to look at her she was conscious each time of a sudden thrill of feeling. More than once he paused for several moments, brush and palette in hand, simply

watching her face. At one of these pauses she herself broke the silence.

"Why do you look at me so?" she asked. "You look at me as if—as if—" And she broke off with an uneasy little laugh.

He roused himself with a slight start and colored sensitively, passing his hand across his forehead.

"What I want to paint is not always in your face," he answered. "Sometimes I lose it, and then I must wait a little until—until I find it again. It is not only your face I want, it is yourself—yourself!" And he made a sudden unconscious gesture with his hands.

She tried to laugh again,—hard and lightly as before,—but failed.

"Myself!" she said. "*Mon Dieu!* Do not grasp at me, Monsieur. It will not pay you. Paint my flesh, my hair, my eyes,—they are good,—but do not paint *me*."

He looked troubled.

"I am afraid my saying that sounded stilted," he returned. "I explained myself poorly. It is not easy for me to explain myself well."

"I understood," she said; "and I have warned you."

They did not speak to each other again during the whole sitting except once, when he asked her if she was warm enough.

"I have a fire to-day," he said.

"Have you not always a fire?" she asked

"No," he answered with a smile; "but when you come here there will always be one."

"Then," she said, "I will come often, that I may save you from death."

"Oh!" he replied, "it is easier than you think to forget that one is cold."

"Yes," she returned. "And it is easier than you think for one to die."

When she was going away, she made a movement toward the easel, but he stopped her.

"Not yet," he said. "Not just yet."

She drew back.

"I have never cared to look at myself before," she said. "I do not know why I should care now. Perhaps," with the laugh again, "it is that I wish to see what you will make of *me*!"

Afterward, as she sat over her little porcelain stove in her room below, she scarcely comprehended her own mood.

"He is not like the rest," she said. "He knows nothing of the world. He is one of the good. He cares only for his art. How simple, and kind, and pure! The little room is like a saint's cell." And then, suddenly, she flung her arms out wearily, with a heavy sigh. "Ah, *Dieu*!" she said, "how dull the day is! The skies are lead!"

A few days later she gave a sitting to an old artist whose name was Masson, and she found that he had heard of what had happened.

"And so you sit to the American," he said.

"Yes."

"Well—and you find him—?"

"I find him," she repeated after him. "Shall I tell you what I find him?"

"I shall listen with delight."

"I find him—a soul! You and I, my friend—and the rest of us—are bodies; he is a soul!"

The artist began to whistle softly as he painted.

"It is dangerous work," he said at length, "for women to play with souls."

"That is true," she answered, coldly.

The same day she went again to the room on the sixth floor. She again sat through an hour of silence in which the American painted eagerly, now and then stopping to regard her with searching eyes.

"But not as the rest regard me," she said to herself. "He forgets that it is a woman who sits here. He sees only what he would paint."

As time went by, this fact, which she always felt, was in itself a fascination.

In the chill, calm atmosphere of the place there was repose for her. She found nothing to resent, nothing to steel herself against, she need no longer think of herself at all. She had time to think of the man in whose presence she sat. From the first she had seen something touching in his slight stooping figure, thin young face and dark womanish eyes, and after she had heard the simple uneventful history of his life, she found them more touching still.

He was a New Englander, the last surviving representative of a frail and short-lived family. His parents had died young, leaving him quite alone, with a mere pittance to depend upon, and throughout his whole life he had cherished but one aim.

"When I was a child I used to dream of coming here," he said, "and as I grew older I worked and struggled for it. I knew I must gain my end some day, and the time came when it was gained."

"And this is the end?" she asked, glancing round at the poor place. "This is all of life you desire?"

He did not look up at her.

"It is all I have," he answered.

She wondered if he would not ask her some questions regarding herself, but he did not.

"He does not care to know," she thought sullenly. And then she told herself that he did know, and a mocking devil of a smile settled on her lips and was there when he turned toward her again.

But the time never came when his manner altered, when he was less candid and gentle, or less grateful for the favor she was bestowing upon him.

She scarcely knew how it was that she first began to know the sound of his foot upon the stairway and to listen for it. Her earliest consciousness of it was when once she awakened suddenly out of a dead sleep at night and found herself sitting upright with her hand upon her heavily throbbing heart.

"What is it?" she cried in a loud whisper. But

she spoke only to herself and the darkness. She knew what it was and did not lie down again until the footsteps had reached the top of the last flight and the door above had opened and closed.

The time arrived when there was scarcely a trifling incident in his every-day life which escaped her. She saw each sign of his poverty and physical weakness. He grew paler day by day. There were days when his step flagged as he went up and down the staircase ; some mornings he did not go out at all. She discovered that each Sunday he went twice to the little American chapel in the Rue de Berri, and she had seen in his room a small Protestant Bible.

" You read that ?" she asked him when she first saw it.

" Yes."

She leaned forward, her look curious, bewildered, even awed.

" And you believe in—God ?"

" Yes."

She resumed her former position, but she did not remove her eyes from his face, and unconsciously she put her hand up to her swelling throat.

When at length the sitting was over and she left her chair he was standing before the easel. He turned to her and spoke hesitantly.

" Will you come and look at it ?" he asked.

She went and stood where he bade her, and looked. He watched her anxiously while she did so. For the first moment there was amazement in

her face, then some mysterious emotion he could not comprehend—a dull red crept slowly over brow and cheek.

She turned upon him.

“Monsieur!” she cried, passionately. “You mock me! It is a bad picture.”

He fell back a pace, staring at her and suddenly trembling with the shock.

“A bad picture!” he echoed. “*I* mock you—*I*?”

“It is my face,” she said, pointing to it, “but you have made it what *I* am not! It is the face of a good woman—of a woman who might be a saint! Does not *that* mock me?”

He turned to it with a troubled, dreamy look.

“It is what I have seen in your face,” he said in a soft, absent voice. “It is a truth to me. It is what *I* have seen.”

“It is what no other has seen,” she said. “I tell you it mocks me.”

“It need not mock you,” he answered. “I could not have painted it if I had not felt it. It is yourself—yourself.”

“Myself?” she said. “Do you think, Monsieur, that the men who have painted me before would know it?”

She gave it another glance and a shrill laugh burst from her, but the next instant it broke off and ended in another sound. She fell upon her knees by the empty chair, her open hands flung outward, her sobs strangling her.

He stood quite near her, looking down.

"I have not thought of anything but my work," he said. "Why should I?"

The following Sunday night the artist Masson met in going down-stairs a closely veiled figure coming up. He knew it and spoke.

"What, Natalie?" he said. "You? One might fancy you had been to church."

"I have been," she returned in a cold voice,—
"to the church of the Americans in the Rue de Berri."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Has it done you good?" he asked.

"No," she answered, and walked past him, leaving him to look after her and think the matter over.

She went to her own apartment and locked herself in. Having done so, she lighted every candle and lamp—flooding the place with a garish mockery of brightness. She sang as she did it—a gay, shrill air from some *opéra bouffe*. She tore off her dark veil and wrappings. Her eyes and cheeks flamed as if touched by some unholy fire. She moved with feverish rapidity here and there—dragging a rich dress from a trunk, and jewels and laces from their places of safe keeping, and began to attire herself in them. The simple black robe she had worn to the chapel lay on the floor. As she moved to and fro she set her feet upon it again and again, and as she felt it beneath her tread a harsh smile touched her lips.

"I shall not wear you again," she stopped her song once to say.

In half an hour she had made her toilette. She stood before her glass, a blaze of color and jewels. For a moment she sang no more. From one of the rooms below there floated up to her sounds of riotous merriment.

"*This* is myself," she said ; "*this* is no other."

She opened her door and ran down the staircase swiftly and lightly. The founder of the feast whose sounds she had heard was a foolish young fellow who adored her madly. He was rich, and wicked, and simple. Because he had heard of her return he had taken an apartment in the house. She heard his voice above the voices of the rest.

In a moment she had flung open the door of the *salon* and stood upon the threshold.

At sight of her there arose a rapturous shout of delight.

"Natalie ! Natalie ! Welcome !"

But instantaneously it died away. One second she stood there, brilliant, smiling, defiant. The next, they saw that a mysterious change had seized upon her. She had become deathly white, and was waving them from her with a wild gesture.

"I am not coming," she cried, breathlessly. "No ! No ! No !"

And the next instant they could only gaze at each others' terror-stricken faces, at the place she had left vacant,—for she was gone.

She went up the stairs blindly and uncertainly.

When she reached the turn of the fourth floor where the staircase was bare and unlighted, she staggered and sank against the balustrades, her face upturned.

"I cannot go back," she whispered to the darkness and silence above. "Do you hear? I cannot! And it is you—you who restrain me!"

But there were no traces of her passion in her face when she went to the little studio the next day as usual. When the artist opened the door for her, it struck him that she was calm even to coldness.

Instead of sitting down, she went to the easel and stood before it.

"Monsieur," she said, "I have discovered where your mistake lies. You have tried to paint what you fancied must once have existed, though it exists no longer. That is your mistake. It has never existed at all. I remember no youth, no childhood. Life began for me as it will end. It was my fate that it should. I was born in the lowest quarter of Paris. I knew only poverty, brutality, and crime. My beauty simply raised me beyond their power. Where should I gain what you have insisted in bestowing upon me?"

He simply stood still and looked at her.

"God knows!" he answered at length. "I do not."

"God!" she returned with her bitter little laugh. "Yes—God!"

Then she went to her place, and said no more.

But the next Sunday she was at the American

chapel again, and the next, and the next. She could scarcely have told why herself. She did not believe the doctrines she heard preached, and she did not expect to be converted to belief in them. Often, as the service proceeded, a faint smile of derision curved her lips ; but from her seat in the obscure corner she had chosen she could see a thin, dark face and a stooping figure, and could lean back against the wall with a sense of repose.

"It is quiet here," was her thought. "One can be quiet, and that is much."

"What is the matter with her?" the men who knew her began to ask one another. But it was not easy for them to discover how the subtle change they saw had been wrought. They were used to her caprices and to occasional fits of sullenness, but they had never seen her in just such a mood as she was now. She would bear no jests from them, she would not join in their gayeties. Sometimes for days together she shut herself up in her room, and they did not see her at all.

The picture progressed but slowly. Sometimes the artist's hand so trembled with weakness that he could not proceed with his work. More than once Natalie saw the brush suddenly fall from his nerveless fingers. He was very weak in these days, and the spot of hectic red glowed brightly on his cheek.

"I am a poor fellow at best," he would say to her, "and now I am at my worst. I am afraid I shall be obliged to rest sooner than I fancied. I

wish first I could have finished my work. I must not leave it unfinished."

One morning when he had been obliged to give up painting, through a sudden fit of prostration, on following her to the door, he took her hand and held it a moment.

"I was awake all last night," he said. "Yesterday I saw a poor fellow who had fallen ill on the street, carried into the Hôtel Dieu, and the memory clung to me. I began to imagine how it would be if such a thing happened to me—what I should say when they asked for my friends,—how there would be none to send for. And at last, suddenly I thought of you. I said to myself, 'I would send for her, and I think she would come.'"

"Yes, Monsieur," she answered. "You might depend upon my coming."

"I am used to being alone," he went on; "but it seemed to me as I lay in the dark thinking it over, that to die alone would be a different matter. One would want some familiar face to look at—"

"Monsieur!" she burst forth. "You speak as if Death were always near you!"

"Do I?" he said. And he was silent for a few seconds, and looked down at her hand as he held it. Then he dropped it gently with a little sigh. "Good-bye," he said, and so they parted.

In the afternoon she sat to Masson.

"How much longer," he said to her in the course of the sitting,— "how much longer does he mean to live—this American? He has lasted

astonishingly. They are wonderful fellows, these weaklings who burn themselves out. One might fancy that the flame which finally destroys them, also kept them alive."

"Do you then think that he is so very ill?" she asked in a low voice.

"He will go out," he answered, "like a candle. Shall I tell you a secret?"

She made a gesture of assent.

"He starves! The *concierge* who has watched him says he does not buy food enough to keep body and soul together. But how is one to offer him anything? It is easy to see that he would not take it."

There was a moment of silence, in which he went on painting.

"The trouble is," he said at last, "that a man would not know how to approach him. It is only women who can do these things."

Until the sitting was over neither the one nor the other spoke again. When it was over and Natalie was on the point of leaving the room, Masson looked at her critically.

"You are pale," he remarked. "You are like a ghost."

"Is it not becoming?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Then why complain?"

She went to her own room and spent half an hour in collecting every valuable she owned. They were not many; she had always been recklessly

improvident. She put together in a package her few jewels, and even the laces she considered worth the most. Then she went out, and, taking a *fiacre* at the nearest corner, drove away.

She was absent two hours, and when she returned she stopped at the entrance, intending to ask the *concierge* a question. But the man himself spoke first. He was evidently greatly disturbed and not a little alarmed.

"Mademoiselle," he began, "the young man on the sixth floor—"

"What of him?" she demanded.

"He desires to see you. He went out in spite of my warnings. Figure to yourself on such a day, in such a state of health. He returned almost immediately, wearing the look of Death itself. He sank upon the first step of the staircase. When I rushed to his assistance he held to his lips a handkerchief stained with blood! We were compelled to carry him upstairs."

She stood a moment, feeling her throat and lips suddenly become dry and parched.

"And he asked—for me?" she said at last.

"When he would speak, Mademoiselle — yes. We do not know why. He said, in a very faint voice, 'She said she would come.' "

She went up the staircase slowly and mechanically, as one who moves in a dream. And yet when she reached the door of the studio she was obliged to wait for a few seconds before opening it. When she did open it she saw the attic seemed even more

cold and bare than usual ; that there was no fire ; that the American lay upon the bed, his eyes closed, the hectic spots faded from his cheeks. But when she approached and stood near him, he opened his eyes and looked at her with a faint smile.

“ If—I play you—the poor trick of—dying,” he said, “ you will remember—that the picture—if you care for it—is yours.”

After a while, the doctor, who had been sent for, arrived. Perhaps he had been in no great hurry when he had heard that his services were required by an artist who lay in a garret in the Latin Quarter. His visit was a short one. He asked a few questions, wrote a prescription, and went away. He looked at Natalie oftener than at the sick man. She followed him out on to the landing, and then he regarded her with greater interest than before.

“ He is very ill ?” she said.

“ Yes,” he answered. “ He will die, of course, sooner or later.”

“ You speak calmly, Monsieur,” she said.

“ Such cases are an old story,” he replied.

“ And—you are not his wife ?”

“ No.”

“ I thought not. Nevertheless, perhaps you will remain with him until—”

“ As Monsieur says,” she returned, “ I will remain with him ‘ until—’ ”

When the sick man awoke from the sleep into

which he had fallen, a fire burned in the stove and a woman's figure was seated before it.

"You are here yet?" he said faintly. She rose and moved toward him.

"I am not going away," she answered, "if you will permit me to remain."

His eyes shone with pathetic brightness, and he put out his hand.

"You are very kind—to a poor—weak fellow," he whispered. "After all—it is a desolate thing—to lie awake through the night—in a place like this."

When the doctor returned the next morning, he appeared even a shade disconcerted. He had thought it quite likely that upon his second visit he might find a scant white sheet drawn over the narrow bed, and that it would not be necessary for him to remain or call again; but it appeared that his patient might require his attention yet a few days longer.

"You have not left him at all," he said to Natalie. "It is easy to see you did not sleep last night."

It was true that she had not slept. Through the night she had sat in the dim glow of the fire, scarcely stirring unless some slight sound of movement from the bed attracted her attention. During the first part of the night her charge had seemed to sleep; but as the hours wore on there had been no more rest for him, and then she had known that he lay with his eyes fixed upon her; she had felt their gaze even before she had turned to meet it,

Just before the dawn he became restless, and called her to his side.

"I owe you a heavy debt," he said drearily. "And I shall leave it unpaid. I wish—I wish it was finished."

"It?" she said.

"The picture," he answered, "the—picture."

Usually he was too weak for speech; but occasionally a fit of restlessness seized upon him, and then it seemed as if he was haunted continually by the memory of his unfinished work.

"It only needed a few touches," he said once. "One day of strength would complete it—if such a day would but come to me. I know the look so well now—I see it on your face so often." And then he lay watching her, his eyes following her yearningly, as she moved to and fro.

In the studios below, the artists waited in vain for their model. They neither saw nor heard anything of her, and they knew her moods too well to be officiously inquisitive. So she was left alone to the task she had chosen, and was faithful to it to the end.

It was not so very long it lasted, though to her it seemed a life-time. A few weeks the doctor made his visits, and at last one afternoon, in going away, he beckoned her out of the room.

He spoke in an undertone.

"To-night you may watch closely," he said; "perhaps toward morning—but it will be very quiet."

It was very quiet. The day had been bitter cold, and as it drew to a close it became colder still, and a fierce wind rose and whistled about the old house, shaking the ill-fitting windows and doors. But the sick man did not seem to hear it. Toward midnight he fell into a deep and quiet sleep.

Before the fire Natalie sat waiting. Now and then a little shudder passed over her as if she could not resist the cold. And yet the fire in the stove was a bright one. She had smiled to herself as she had heaped the coal upon it, seeing that there was so little left.

"It will last until morning," she said, "and that will be long enough." Through all the nights during which she had watched she had never felt the room so still as it seemed now between the gusts and sougning of the wind. "Something is in the air which has not been in it before," she said.

About one o'clock she rose and replenished the fire, putting the last fragment of coal upon it, and then sat down to watch it again.

Its slow kindling and glowing into life fascinated her. It was not long before she could scarcely remove her eyes from it. She was trying to calculate—with a weird fancy in her mind—how long it would last, and whether it would die out suddenly or slowly.

As she cowered over it, if one of the men who admired her had entered he might well scarcely have known her. She was hollow-eyed, haggard and

pallid—for the time even her great beauty was gone. As he had left her that day, the doctor had said to himself discontentedly that after all, these wonderful faces last but a short time.

The fire caught at the coal, lighted fitful blazes among it, and crept over it in a dull red, which brightened into hot scarlet.

And the sick man lay sleeping, breathing faintly but lightly.

“It will last until dawn,” she said,—“until dawn, and no longer.”

When the first cinder dropped with a metallic sound, she started violently and laid her hand upon her breast, but after that she scarcely stirred.

The fitful blazes died down, the hot scarlet deepened to red again, the red grew dull, a gray film of ashes showed itself upon it, and then came the first faint gray of dawn, and she sat with beating heart saying to herself,

“It will go out soon — suddenly.” And the dying man was awake, speaking to her.

“Come here,” he said in a low, clear voice.
“Come here.”

She went to him and stood close by the bedside. The moment of her supreme anguish had come. But he showed no signs of pain or dread, only there was a little moisture upon his forehead and about his mouth.

His eyes shone large and bright in the snowy pallor of his face, and when he fixed them upon her she knew he would not move them away.

"I am glad—that it is—finished," he said. "It did not tire me to work—as I thought it would. I am glad—that it is—finished."

She fell upon her knees.

"That it is finished?" she said.

His smile grew brighter.

"The picture," he whispered—"the picture."

And then what she had waited for came. There was a moment of silence; the wind outside hushed itself, his lips parted, but no sound came from them, not even a fluttering breath; his eyes were still fixed upon her face, open, bright, smiling.

"I may speak now," she cried. "I may speak now—since you cannot hear. I love you! I love you!"

But there came to her ears only one sound—the little grating shudder of the fire as it fell together and was dead.

The next morning when they heard that "the American" had at last fulfilled their prophecies, the *locataires* showed a spasmodic warmth of interest. They offered their services promptly, and said to each other that he must have been a good fellow, after all—that it was a pity they had not known him better. They even protested that he should not be made an object of charity—that among themselves they would do all that was necessary. But it appeared that their help was not needed—that there was in the background a friend who had done all, but whom nobody knew.

Hearing this they expressed their sympathy by going up by twos and threes to the little garret where there was now only icy coldness and silence.

Not a few among them were so far touched by the pathos they found in this as to shed a tear or so—most of them were volatile young Frenchmen who counted their sensibilities among their luxuries.

Toward evening there came two older than the rest, who had not been long in the house.

When they entered, a woman stood at the bed's head—a woman in black drapery, with a pale and haggard face which they saw only for a moment.

As they approached she moved away, and going to the window stood there with her back toward them, gazing out at the drifted snow upon the roof. The men stood uncovered, looking down.

"It is the face of an Immortal," said the elder of the two. "It is such men who die young."

And then they saw the easel in the shadow of the corner, and went and turned it from the wall. When they saw the picture resting upon it, there was a long silence. It was broken at last by the older man.

"It is some woman he has known and loved," he said. "He has painted her soul—and his own."

The figure near them stirred—the woman's hand

crept up to the window's side and clung to the wooden frame.

But she did not turn, and was standing so when the strangers moved away, opened the door and passed, with heads still uncovered, down the dark rickety stairs.

A fiercer cold had never frozen Paris than held it ice and snow bound through this day and the next. When the next came to its close all was over and the studios were quiet again—perhaps a little quieter for a few hours than was their wont.

Through this second day Natalie lived—slowly : through the first part of the morning in which people went heavily up and down the stairs ; through the later hours when she heard them whispering among themselves upon the landings ; through the hour when the footsteps that came down were heavier still, and slower, and impeded with some burden borne with care ; through the moment when they rested with this burden upon the landing outside her very door, and inside she crouched against the panels—listening.

Then it was all done, and upon those upper floors there was no creature but herself.

She had lighted no fire and eaten nothing. She had neither food, fuel, nor money. All was gone.

"It is well," she said, "that I am not hungry, and that I would rather be colder than warmer."

She did not wish for warmth, even when night fell and brought more biting iciness. She sat by

her window in the dark until the moon rose, and though shudders shook her from head to foot, she made no effort to gain warmth. She heard but few sounds from below, but she waited until all was still before she left her place.

But at midnight perfect silence had settled upon the house, and she got up and left her room, leaving the key unturned in the lock. "To-morrow, or the day after, perhaps," she said, "they will wish to go in." Then she went up the stairs for the last time.

Since she had heard the heavy feet lumbering with their burden past her door, a singular calm had settled upon her. It was not apathy so much as a repose born of the knowledge that there was nothing more to bear—no future to be feared.

But when she opened the door of the little room this calmness was for a moment lost.

It was so cold, so still, so bare in the moonlight which streamed through the window and flooded it. There were left in it only two things—the narrow, vacant bed covered with its white sheet, and the easel on which the picture rested, gazing out at her from the canvas with serene, mysterious eyes.

She staggered forward and sank down before it, uttering a low, terrible cry.

"Do not reproach me!" she cried. "There is no longer need. Do you not see? This is my expiation!"

For a while there was dead silence again. She

crouched before the easel with bowed head and her face veiled upon her arms, making no stir or sound. But at length she rose again, numbly and stiffly. She stood up and glanced slowly about her—at the bareness, at the moonlight, at the narrow, white-draped bed.

“It will be—very cold,” she whispered as she moved toward the door. “It will be—very cold.”

And then the little room was empty, and the face upon the easel turned toward the entrance seemed to listen to her stealthily descending feet.

The next morning the two artists who had visited the dead man's room together, were walking—together again—upon the banks of the Seine, when they found themselves drawing near a crowd of men and women who were gathered at the water's edge.

“What has happened?” they asked, as they approached the group. “What has been found?”

A cheerful fellow in a blue blouse, standing with his hands in his pockets, answered.

“A woman. *Ma foi!* what a night to drown oneself in! Imagine the discomfort!”

The older man pushed his way into the centre, and a moment later uttered an exclamation.

“*Mon Dieu!*”

“What is it?” cried his companion.

His friend turned to him, breathlessly pointing to what lay upon the frozen earth.

“We asked each other who the original of the

picture was," he said. "We did not know. The face lies there. Look!"

For that which life had denied her, Death had given.

TWO PURSE-COMPANIONS.

BY GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

EVERYBODY in college who knew them at all was curious to see what would come of a friendship between two persons so opposite in tastes, habitudes and appearance as John Silverthorn and Bill Vibbard. John was a hard reader, and Bill a lazy one. John was thin and graceful, with something pensive yet free and vivid in his nature ; Bill was robust, prosaic and conventional. There was an air of neglect and a prospective sense of worldly failure about Silverthorn, but you would at once have singled out Vibbard as being well cared for, and adapted to push his way. Their likes and dislikes even in the matter of amusement were dissimilar ; and Vibbard was easy-going and popular, while Silverthorn was shy and had few acquaintances. Yet, as far as possible, they were always with each other ; they roomed, worked, walked

and lounged in company, and often made mutual concessions of taste so that they might avoid being separated. It was also discovered that though their allowances were unequal, they had put them together and paid all expenses out of a common purse. Their very differences made this alliance a great advantage in some respects, and it was rendered stronger by the fact that, however incompatible outwardly, they both agreed in acting with an earnest straightforwardness.

But perhaps I had better describe how I first saw them together. It was on a Saturday, when a good many men were always sure to be found disporting themselves on the ball-field. I used to exercise my own muscles by going to look at them, on these occasions ; and on that particular day I came near being hit by a sudden ball, which was caught by an active, darting figure just in time to save my head from an awkward encounter. I nodded to my rescuer, and called out cordially, "Thank you !"

"All right," said he, in a glum tone meant to be good-naturedly modest. "Look out for yourself next time."

It was Bill Vibbard, then in the latter part of his freshman year ; and not far distant I discovered his comrade Silverthorn, watching Bill in silent admiration. They continued slowly on their way toward an oak grove, which then stood near the field. Silverthorn, a smaller figure than Vibbard, wore a suit of uniform tint, made of sleazy gray

stuff that somehow at once gave me the idea that it was taken out of one of his mother's discarded dresses. His face was nearly colorless without being pallid ; and the faint golden down on his cheeks and upper lip, instead of being disagreeably juvenile, really added to the pleasant dreaminess that hung like a haze over his mild young features. He was slender, he carried himself rather quaintly ; but his gait was buoyant and spirited. At that season the lilacs were in bloom, and Silverthorn held a glorious plume of the pale blossoms in his hand. What the first touch of fire is to the woods in autumn, the blooming of the lilac is to the new summer—a mystery, a beauty, too exquisite to last long intact ; evanescent as human breath, yet, like that, fraught with incalculable values. All this Silverthorn must have felt to the full, judging from the tender way in which he held the flowers, even while absorbed in talk with his friend. His fingers seemed conscious that they were touching the clue to a finer life. In Vibbard's warm, tough fist, the lilacs would have faded within ten minutes. Vibbard was stocky and muscular, and his feet went down at each step as if they never meant to come up again. He wore stylish clothes, kept his hands much in his coat pockets, affected high-colored neck-scarfs, and had a red face with blunt features. When he was excited, his face wore a fierce aspect ; when he felt friendly, it became almost foolishly sentimental ; as a general thing it was morosely inert.

Being in my senior year, I did not see much of either Vibbard or his friend ; but I sometimes occupied myself with attempts to analyze the sources of their intimacy. I remember stating to one of my young acquaintances that Vibbard probably had a secret longing to be feminine and ideal, and that Silverthorn felt himself at fault in masculine toughness and hardihood, so that each sought the companionship of the other, hoping to gain some of the qualities which he himself lacked ; and my young acquaintance offended me by replying, as if it had all been perfectly obvious, "Of course."

After I had been graduated, and had entered the Law School, Silverthorn and Vibbard came to my room one day, on a singular errand, which—though I did not guess it then—was to influence their lives for many a year afterward.

"Ferguson," began Bill, rather shyly, when they had seated themselves, "I suppose you know enough of law, by this time, to draw up a paper."

"Yes, I suppose so ; or draw it down, either," I replied. But I saw at once that my flippancy did not suit the occasion, for the two young fellows glanced at each other very seriously and seemed embarrassed. "What do you want me to do?" I asked.

Silverthorn now spoke, in his soft light inexperienced voice, which possessed a singular charm.

"It's all Bill's idea," said he, rather carelessly. "I would much rather have the understanding in words, but he—"

"Yes," broke in Bill, growing suddenly red and vehement, "I'm not going to have it a thing that can be forgotten. No one knows what might happen."

"Well, well," said I, "if I'm to help you, you'd better fire away and tell me what it is you're after."

"I will," returned Vibbard, with a touch of that fierceness which marked his resolute moods. "Thorny and I have agreed to stand by each other when we quit college. Men are always forming friendships in the beginning of life, and then getting dragged apart by circumstances, such as wide separation and different interests. We don't want this to happen, and so we've made a compact that whichever one of us, Thorny or me, shall be worth thirty thousand dollars first,—why that one is to give the other half. That is, unless the second one is already well enough off, so that to give him a full half would put him ahead of whichever has the thirty thousand. D' you see?"

"The idea is to keep even as long as we can, you know," said Silverthorn, turning from one of my books which he had begun to glance through, and looking into my eyes with a delighted, straightforward gaze.

"That's a very curious notion!" said I, revolving the plan with a caution born of legal readings. "Before we go on, would you mind telling me which one of you originated this scheme?"

I was facing Silverthorn as I spoke, but felt im-

pelled to turn quickly and include Vibbard in the question. They were both silent. It was plain, after a moment, that they really didn't know which one of them had first thought of this compact.

"Wasn't it you?" queried Silverthorn, musingly, of his comrade.

"I don't know," returned Vibbard; then, as if so much subtilty annoyed him: "What difference does it make, anyway? Can't you draw an agreement for us, Ferguson?"

But I was really so much interested in getting at their minds through this channel, that I couldn't comply at once.

"Now, you two fellows, you know," said I, laughing, "are younger than I, and I think it becomes me to know exactly what this thing means, before proceeding any further in it. How can I tell but one of you is trying to get an advantage over the other?"

The pair looked startled at this, but it was only, I found, because they were so astonished at having such a construction put upon their project.

"Don't be alarmed," I hastened to say. "I wasn't serious."

But Vibbard persisted in a dogged expression of gloom.

"It's always this way," he presently declared, in a heavy, provoked tone. "My father, you know, is a shrewd man, and everybody is forever accusing me of being mean and overreaching. But I never dreamed that it could be imputed in such a move as

—well, never mind !” he suddenly exclaimed in a loud voice, and with assumed indifference, getting up from his chair. “ Of course it’s all over now. I sha’n’t do anything more about it, after what Ferguson has said.” He was so sulky that he had to resort to thus putting me in the third person, although he was not addressing these words to Silverthorn. Then he gave his thick frame a slight shake, as if to get rid of the disagreeable feelings I had excited, and turned toward his friend. On the instant there came into his unmoved eyes and his matter-of-fact countenance a look of sentiment so incongruous as to be almost laughable. “ I wish I could have done it, Thorny,” said he, wistfully.

“ Hold on, Vibbard,” I interposed. “ Don’t be discouraged.”

He paid no attention.

Upon this Silverthorn fired up.

“ Hullo, Bill, this won’t do ! Do you suppose I’m going to let our pet arrangement drop that way and leave you to be so misconstrued ? Come back here and sit down.” (Vibbard was already at the door.) “ As for *your* getting any advantage out of this, is it likely ? Why, you are well off now, to begin with ; that is, your father is ; and I am poor, downright poor—Ferguson must have seen that.”

Here was a surprise ! The dreamy youth was proving himself much more sensible than the beefy and practical one. Vibbard, however, seemed to enjoy being admonished by Silverthorn, and re-

sumed his seat quite meekly. To me, in my balancing frame of mind, it occurred that one might go farther than Silverthorn had done, in saying that any advantage to Vibbard was very improbable; one might assume that it was surely Silverthorn who would reap the profit. But I decided not to disturb the already troubled waters any more.

Silverthorn, however, expressed this idea: "You'll be thinking," he said to me, with a smile, "that *I* am going to get the upper hand in this bargain; and I know there seems a greater chance of it. But then I have hopes—I—" The dreamy look, which I have described by the simile of a haze, gathered and increased on his fair ingenuous young face, and his eyes quite ignored me for a moment, being fixed on some imaginary outlook very entrancing to him, until he recalled his flagging voice, to add: "Well, I don't know that I can put it before you, but there are possibilities which may make a great difference in my fortunes within a few years."

I fancied that Vibbard gave me a quick, confidential glance, as much as to say, "Don't disturb that idea. Let him think so." But the next moment his features were as inert as ever.

It turned out, on inquiry, that only Vibbard was of age; his friend being quick in study, had entered college early, and nearly two years stood between him and his majority; so that, if their contract was to be binding, they would have to defer it for that length of time. I was prepared

for their disappointment ; but Silverthorn, after an instant's reflection, seemed quite satisfied. As they were going, he hurried back, leaving his friend out of ear-shot, and explained himself,—

“ You see, Vibbard has an idea that I shall never succeed in life,—financially, that is,—and so he wants to fasten this agreement on me, to prevent pride or anything making me back out, you know, by and by. But I like all the better to have it left just as it is for a while, so that if we should ever put it on paper he needn't feel that he had hurried into the thing too rashly.”

“ I understand,” I replied ; and I pressed his hand warmly, for his frankness and genuineness had pleased me.

When they were gone, I pondered several minutes on the novelty and boyish naïveté of the whole proceeding, and found myself a good deal refreshed by the sincerity of the two young fellows and their fine confidence in the perfectibility of the future. It seemed to me, the more I thought of it, that I could hold on to this scheme of theirs as a help to myself in retaining a healthy freshness of spirit. “ At any rate,” I said, “ I won't allow myself to go adrift into cynicism as long as they keep faith with their ideal.”

From time to time during the two years, I encountered the friends casually ; and I remember having a fancy that their faces—which of course altered somewhat, as they matured—were acquiring a kind of likeness ; or, rather, were *exchang-*

ing expressions. Silverthorn's grew rounder and brightened a degree in color ; his glance had less momentum in it ; he looked more commonplace and contented. On the other hand, Vibbard, through mental exertion (for he had lately been studying hard) and the society of his junior, had modified the inertia of his own expression. The strength of his features began to be mingled with gentleness. But this I recalled only at a later time.

Near the end of the two years' limit, when the boon companions were on the eve of taking their degrees, I found that another element had come into their affairs.

Going out one evening to visit a friend who lived at some distance on one of the large railroads, I had a glimpse of a small manufacturing place, which the train passed with great rapidity at late twilight. The large mill was already lighted up, and every window flashed as we sped by. But the sunset had not quite faded, and, from the colored sky far away behind the mill, light enough still came to show the narrow glen with its wall of autumn foliage on either side, the black and silent river above the dam, the sudden shining screen of falling water at the dam itself, and again a smooth dark current below, running toward us and under the railroad embankment. There was a small settlement of operatives' houses near the factory, and two or three larger homes were visible, snugly placed among the trees. We were swept away out

of sight in a moment ; but there was something so striking in that single glimpse, that a traveller in the next seat, who had not spoken to me before, turned and asked me what place it was. I did not know. I afterward learned that it was Stansby, a factory village perhaps forty miles from Cambridge. Finding that the memory of the spot clung to me, I wished to know more about it ; and one day in the following spring, when I needed a change from the city, I actually went out there. Stansby did not prove to be a very picturesque place ; yet its gentle hills, with outcroppings of cold granite, the deep-hued river between, and the cotton-mill near the railroad, somehow roused a decided interest which I never have been able wholly to account for. I enjoyed strolling about, but was beginning to think of a train back to Boston, when a turn of the road, a quarter of a mile from the mill, brought me face to face with a young girl who was approaching slowly with a book in her hand, which she read as she walked.

She was not a beautiful girl, and not at all what is understood by a "brilliant" girl ; yet at the very first look she excited my interest, as Stansby village itself had done. In every outline and motion she showed perfect health ; her clear color was tonic to the eye ; her deep brown hair, at the same time that it gave a restful look to her forehead, added something of fervency to her general aspect. In sympathy with the beautiful day, she had taken off her hat (which she carried on one

arm), disclosing a spray of fresh lilacs in her hair. She was very simply, though not poorly, dressed. All this, and more, I was able to observe without disturbing her absorption in her book ; but just as I was trying to decide whether the firm, compressed corners of her mouth only meant interest in the reading, or indicated some peculiar hardness of character, she glanced up and saw my eyes bent upon her.

Then, for an instant, there came into her own a look of eager search ; no softly inquiring gaze, such as would be natural to most women on a casual meeting of this sort, but a full, energetic, self-reliant scrutiny. I don't think the compression about her lips was softened by her surprise at seeing me ; but that keen level look from her eyes brought a wonderful change over her face, so that from being interesting it became attractive, and I was fired by a kind of enthusiasm in beholding it. Involuntarily I took off my hat, and paused at the side of the highway. She bent her head again,—perhaps with some acknowledgment of my bow, but not definitely for that purpose, because she continued reading as she passed me.

But now came the strangest part of the episode. This girl disappeared around the bend of the road, and after her two young fellows drew near whom I recognized as Vibbard and Silverthorn. It happened that Silverthorn, as on the very first day I had ever seen him, carried a sprig of lilac. Happened ? No ; the lilac in the girl's hair was too

strong a coincidence to be overlooked, and I was not long in guessing that there was some tender meaning in it.

"Hullo ! Ferguson."

"Did you know we were here?"

These exclamations were made with some confusion, and Silverthorn blushed faintly.

"No," said I. "Do you come often?"

They looked at each other confidentially.

"We have, lately," Vibbard admitted.

"Then perhaps you can tell me who that girl is that I just passed."

"Oh, yes," said Silverthorn, at once. "That's Ida Winwood, the daughter of the superintendent here at the mills."

"She is a very striking girl," I said. "You know her, of course?"

"A little."

Vibbard enlarged upon this : it was a curious habit they had fallen into, of each waiting for the other to explain what should more properly have been explained by himself.

"Thorny's father, you know," said Vibbard, "was a great machinist, and so they had acquaintances around at mills in different parts of the State. She—that is Ida, you know—is only sixteen now, but Thorny first saw her when he was a boy and came here, once or twice, with his father."

Silverthorn nodded his head corroboratively.

"But it seems to me," I said, addressing him, "that you treat her rather distantly for an old

acquaintance ; or else she treats *you* distantly. Which is it ?”

They laughed, and Vibbard blurted out, with a queer, boyish grimace :

‘ It’s *me*. She don’t like me. Hey, Thorny ?’

“ It’s nearer the truth,” returned his friend, “ to say that you’re so bashful you don’t give her half a chance to make known what she does think of you.”

“ Oh, time enough—time enough,” said Vibbard, good-humoredly.

Remembering that I must hurry back to catch my train, I suddenly found that I had been in an abstracted mood, for I was still standing with my hat off.

“ Well, let me know how you get on,” I said, jocosely, as I parted from the comrades.

Yet for the life of me I could not tell which one of them it was that I should expect to hear from as a suitor for the girl’s hand.

It was within a fortnight after this that they came to my office—for I had been admitted to the bar—and announced that the time for drawing up their long-pending agreement had arrived. They were still as eager as ever about it, and I very soon had the instrument made out, stating the mutual consideration, and duly signed and sealed.

Finding that they had been at Stansby again, I was prompted to ask them more about Ida.

“ Do you know,” I said, boldly, “ that I am very much puzzled as to which of you was the more interested in her ?”

They took it in good part, and Silverthorn answered :

“ That’s not surprising. I don’t know, myself.”

“ I’m trying,” said Vibbard, bluntly, “ to make Thorny fall in love with her. But I can’t seem to succeed.”

“ No,” said his friend, “ because I insist upon it that she’s just the woman for *you*.”

Vibbard turned to me with an expression of ridicule.

“ Yes,” he said, “ Thorny is as much wrapped up in that idea as if his own happiness depended on my marrying her.”

“ You’re rivals then, after a new fashion,” was my comment. “ Don’t you see, though, how you are to settle it ?”

“ No.”

“ Why, each of you should propose in form, for the other. Then Miss Winwood would have to take the difficulty into her own hands.”

“ Ha, ha !” laughed Vibbard. “ That’s a good idea. But suppose she don’t care for either of us ?”

“ Very well. I don’t see that in that case she would be worse off than yourselves, for neither of you seems to care for her.”

“ Oh yes, we do !” exclaimed Silverthorn, instantly.

“ Yes, we care a great deal,” insisted Vibbard.

They both grew so very earnest over this that I didn’t dare to continue the subject, and it was left in greater mystery than before.

At last the time of graduation came, and the two friends parted to pursue their separate ways. Silverthorn had a widowed mother living at a distance in the country, whose income had barely enabled her to send him through college on a meagre allowance. He went home to visit her for a few days, and then promptly took his place on a daily newspaper in Boston, where he spent six months of wretched failure. He had great hopes of achieving in a short time some prodigious triumph in writing, but at the end of this period he gave it all up, and decided to develop the mechanical genius which he thought he had perhaps inherited from his father. I began to have a suspicion when I learned that this new turn had led him to Stansby, where he procured a position as a sort of clerk to the superintendent, Winwood.

After some months, I went out to see him there. In the evening we went to the Winwoods', and I watched closely to discover any signs of a new relation between Silverthorn and the daughter. Mr. Winwood himself was a homely, perfectly commonplace man, whose face looked as if it had been stamped with a die which was to furnish a hundred duplicate physiognomies. Mrs. Winwood was a fat, woolly sort of woman, who knitted, and rocked in her rocking-chair, keeping time to her needles. A smell of tea and chops came from the adjoining room, where they had been having supper; and there was a big, hot-colored lithograph of Stansby Mills hung up over the fireplace, with one or two

awkward-looking engravings of famous men and their families on the remaining wall-spaces. Yet, even with these crude and barren surroundings, the girl Ida retained a peculiar and inspiring charm. She talked in a full, free tone of voice, and was very sensible ; but in everything she said or did, there was a mixture, with the prosaic, of something so sweet and fresh, that I could not help thinking she was very remarkable. In particular, there was that strong, fine look from the eyes, which had impressed me on my first casual meeting in the road. It had a transforming power, and seemed to speak of resolution, aspiration, of self-sacrifice. I noticed with what enthusiasm she glanced up at Silverthorn, when he was showing her some drawings of machinery, executed by himself, and was dilating upon certain improvements which he intended to make. Still, there was a reserve between them, and a timidity on his part, which showed that no engagement to marry had been made, as yet.

He was very silent as we walked together beside the dark river toward the railroad, after our call. But, when we came abreast of the dam, with its sudden burst of noise, and its continual hissing murmur, he stopped short, with a look of passion in his face.

"Things have changed since Vibbard went away," he said. "Yes, yes ; very much. I used to think it was he who ought to love her."

"And you have found out—" I began.

He laid his hand quickly on my arm.

"Yes, I have found that it is I who love her—eternally, truly! But don't tell any one of this; it seems to me strange that I should speak of it, even to you. I cannot ask her to marry me yet. But there seems to be a relief in letting you know."

I was expressing my pleasure at being of any use to him, when the ominous sound of the approaching cars made itself heard, and I had to hurry off. But, all the way back to the city, I could think of nothing but Silverthorn's announcement; and suddenly there flashed upon me the secret and the danger of the whole situation. This girl, who had so much interested the two friends, in spite of their strong contrasts of character, was, perhaps, the only one in the world who could have pleased them both; for in her own person she seemed to display a mixture of elements, much the same and quite as decided as theirs. What, then, if Vibbard also should wake up to the knowledge of a love for her?

The next time I saw Silverthorn, which was a full year later, I said to him:

"Do you hear from Vibbard anything about that agreement to divide your gains?"

"No!" he replied, avoiding my eye; "nothing about that."

"Do you expect him to keep it?"

"Yes!" he said, glancing swiftly up again, with a gleam of friendly vindication in his eyes. "I know he will."

"But I hear hard things said of him," I persisted. "Reports have lately come to me as to some rather close, not to say sharp, bargains of his. He is successful ; perhaps he is changing."

For the first time I saw Silverthorn angry.

"Never say a word of that sort to me again !" he cried, with a demeanor bordering on violence.

I was a little piqued, and inquired :

"Well, how do you get on toward being in a position to pay him ?"

But I regretted my thrust. Silverthorn's face fell, and he could make no reply.

"Is there no prospect of success with those machines you were talking of last year ?" I asked more kindly.

"No," said he, sadly. "I'm afraid not. I shall never succeed. It all depends on Vibbard, now. I cannot even marry, unless he gets enough to give me a start."

I left him with a dreary misgiving in my heart. What an unhappy outcome of their compact was this !

Meanwhile, Vibbard was thriving. After a brief sojourn with his father, who was a well-to-do hardware merchant in his own small inland city, he went to Virginia and began sheep-farming. In two years he had gained enough to find it feasible to return to New York, where he took up the business of a note-broker. People who knew him prophesied that he would prove too slow to be a successful man in early life ; and, in fact, as he did

not look like a quick man, he was a long time in gaining the reputation of one. But his sagacious instincts moved all the more effectively for being masked, and he made some astonishing strokes. It began to seem as if other men around him who lost, were controlled by some deadly attraction which forced them to throw their success under Vibbard's feet. His car rolled on over them. Everything yielded him a pecuniary return.

As he was approaching his thirtieth birthday, he found himself worth a little over thirty thousand dollars—after deducting expenses, bad claims, and a large sum repaid to his father for the cost of his college course. He had been only six years in accumulating it. But how endlessly prolonged had those six years been for Silverthorn ! When three of them had passed, he declared his love to Ida Winwood, though in such a way that she need neither refuse nor accept him at once ; and a *quasi* engagement was made between them, having in view a probable share in Vibbard's fortunes. Once,—perhaps more than once,—Silverthorn bitterly reproached himself, in her presence, for trusting so entirely to another man's energies. But Ida put up her hands beseechingly, looking at him with a devoted faith.

“No, John !” she cried. “There is nothing wrong about it. If you were other than you are, I might not wish it to be so. But you,—you are different from other men ; there is something finer about you, and you are not meant for battling

your way. But, when once you get this money, you will give all your time to inventing, or writing, and then people will find out what you are !”

There was something strange and pathetic in their relation to each other, now. Silverthorn seemed nervous and weary ; he looked as if he were growing old, even with that soft yellow beard and his pale brown hair still unchanged (for he was only twenty-eight). His spirits were capricious ; sometimes bounding high with hope, and, at others, utterly despondent. Ida, meantime, had reached a full development ; she was twenty-two, fresh, strong, and self-reliant. When they were together, she had the air of caring for him as for an invalid.

Suddenly, one day, at the close of Vibbard’s six years’ absence, Silverthorn came running from the mill during working-hours, and burst into the superintendent’s cottage with an open letter in his hand, calling aloud for Ida.

“ He is coming ! He is coming !” cried he, breathless, but with a harsh excitement, as if he had been flying from an angry pursuer.

“ Who ? What has happened ?” returned Ida, in alarm.

“ Vibbard.”

But he looked so wild and distraught, that Ida could not understand.

“ Vibbard ?” she repeated. Then, — with an amazed apprehension which came swiftly upon her, — shutting both hands tight as if to strengthen

herself, and bringing them close together over her bosom : " Have you quarreled with him ? "

" Quarreled ? " echoed Silverthorn, looking back her amazement. " Why, do you suppose the world has come to an end ? Don't you know we would sooner die than quarrel ? "

" Vibbard — coming ! " repeated Ida, as she caught sight of the letter. " Yes ; now, I see. "

" But, doesn't it make you happy ? " asked her lover, suddenly annoyed at her cool reception of the news.

" I don't know, " she answered, pensively. " You have startled me so. Besides,—why should it make me happy ? " A singular confusion seemed to have come over her mind. " Of course, " she added, after a moment, " I am happy, because he's your friend. "

" But,—the money, Ida ! " He took her hand, but received no answering pressure. " The money,—think of it ! We shall be able— " Then catching sight of an expression on her features that was almost cruel in its chill absence of sympathy, Silverthorn dropped her hand in a pet, and walked quickly out of the house back to the mill.

She did not follow him. It was their first misunderstanding.

Silverthorn remained at his desk, went to his own boarding-house for dinner, and returned to the mill, but always with a sense of unbroken suffering. What had happened ? Why had Ida been so unresponsive ? Why had he felt angry

with her? These questions repeated themselves incessantly, and were lost again in a chaotic humming that seemed to fill his ears and to shut out the usual sounds of the day, making him feel as if thrust away into a cell by himself, at the same time that he was moving about among other people.

Vibbard was to arrive that afternoon. Silverthorn wished he had told Ida, before leaving her, how soon his friend was coming. As no particular hour had been named in the letter, he grew intolerably restless, and finally told Winwood that he was going to the *dépôt*, to wait.

All this time Ida had been nearly as wretched as he; and, unable to make out why this cloud had come over them just when they ought to have been happiest, she, too, went out into the air for relief, and wandered along the hill-side by the river.

It was early summer again. The lilacs were in bloom. All along the fence in front of Winwood's house were vigorous bushes in full flower. Ida, as she passed out, broke off a spray and put it in her hair, wishing that its faint perfume might be a spell to bring Silverthorn back.

On the edge of the wood where she had been idly pacing for a few minutes, all at once she heard a crackling of twigs and dry leaves under somebody's active tread, just behind her. It did not sound like her lover's step. She looked around. The man, a stranger with strong features and thick beard, halted at once and looked at her—silently,

as if he had forgotten to speak, but with a degree of homage that dispelled everything like alarm.

She stood still, looking at him as earnestly as he at her. Then, she hardly knew how, a conviction came to her.

"Mr. Vibbard?" she said, in a low inquiring tone. To herself she whispered, "Six years!"

Somehow, although she expected it, there was something terrible in having this silent, strange man respond:

"Yes."

He spoke very gently, and put out his hand to her.

She laid her own in his strong grasp, and then instantly felt as if she had done something wrong. But he would not let it go again. Drawing her a little toward him, he turned so that they could walk together back to the mills.

"Did John send you this way? Have you seen him?" she asked, falteringly.

"No," said Vibbard. "From where I happened to be, I thought I could get here sooner by walking over through Bartlett. Besides, it was pleasanter to come my own way instead of by railroad."

"But how did you know me?"

"I have never forgotten how you looked. And besides, that lilac."

With a troubled impulse, Ida drew her hand away from his, and snatched the blossoms out of her hair, meaning to throw them away. Then she hesitated, seeing her rudeness. Vibbard, who had

not understood the movement, said with a tone of delight :

" Won't you give them to me ? Do you remember how you wore them in your hair one day, years ago ? "

" I have reasons for not forgetting it," she answered with a laugh, feeling more at her ease. " Well, I have spoiled this bunch now, but of course you may have them."

He took the flowers, and they walked on, talking more like old friends. At the moment when this happened, Silverthorn, who, while waiting for another train to arrive, had come back to the house in search of Ida, passed on into a little orchard on a slope, just beyond, which overlooked a bend in the road : from there he saw Ida give Vibbard the lilac spray. At first he scarcely knew his old friend, and the sight struck him with a jealous pang he had never felt before. Then suddenly he saw that it was Vibbard, and would have rushed down the slope to welcome him. But like a detaining hand upon him, the remembrance of his foolish quarrel with Ida held him back. He slunk away secretly through the orchard, into the woods, and hurried to meet Vibbard at a point below the house, where Ida would have left him.

He was not disappointed. He gained the spot in time, and appeared to be walking up from the mill, when he encountered his old comrade going sturdily toward it. Nevertheless, he felt uncomfortable at the deception he was using. They

greeted each other warmly, yet each felt a constraint that surprised him.

Vibbard explained how he had come.

"And I have seen Ida," he exclaimed impetuously, with a glow of pleasure. Then he stopped in embarrassment. "Are you going back that way?" he asked.

"No," said the other, gloomily. "We'll go over the river to where I live."

They took the path in that direction, and on the way Vibbard began explaining how he had arranged his property.

"It's just as well not to go up to the Winwoods' until we've finished this," he said, parenthetically. "And to tell you the truth, Thorny, it's a queer business for me to be about, after I've been hard at work for so long, scraping together what I've got. I shouldn't much like people to know about it, I can tell you; and I never would do it for any man but you."

Formerly, Silverthorn had been used to this sort of bluntness, but now it irritated him.

"Do you mean to say," he asked, "that you would break your bargain, if it had been made with any one besides me?"

Vibbard drew himself up proudly.

"No, sir!" he declared, in a cold tone. "I keep my word whenever I have given it."

Silverthorn uttered an oath under his breath.

"If you mean to keep your word, why don't you do it without blustering? Suppose I *have* been

unfortunate enough to come out behind in the race, and to need this money of yours? Is that any reason why you should grind into me like a file the sense of my obligation to you?"

"Come, Thorny," said his friend, "you are treating me like a stranger. How long is it since you got these high-strung notions?"

"I suppose I've been growing sensitive since I first perceived that I was dependent on your fortune. It has unmanned me. I believe I might have done something, but for this."

"Gad, so might I be doing something, now, if I had my whole capital," muttered Vibbard.

He did not see how his remark renewed the wound he had just been trying to heal. For several years he had felt that the compact with his friend was a useless clog on himself, and this had probably caused him to dwell too much on his own generosity in making it.

Both felt pained and dissatisfied with their meeting. It was full of sordidness and discomfort; it seemed in one hour to have stripped from their lives the romance of youth. But after their little tiff they tried to recover their spirits and succeeded in keeping up a sham kind of gayety. Arrived at Silverthorn's lodging, they completed their business; Vibbard handing over a check, and receiving in exchange Silverthorn's copy of the agreement with a receipt in due form.

"How long can you stay, Bill?" asked Silverthorn, more cheerfully, when this was over. A sup-

pressed elation at his good luck made him tingle from top to toe; and, to tell the truth, he did not feel much interest in Vibbard's remaining.

"I must be off to-morrow," said his friend. "I suppose I can stay here to-night?"

"Of course."

"I must call on Ida, before I go."

Silverthorn's brow darkened.

"Ah, Thorny," continued Vibbard, unconsciously, "it's queer to look back to that time when we were trying to persuade each other to make love to her! Do you know that since I've been away, she's never once gone out of my mind?"

"Is that so?" returned his comrade, with a strained and cloudy effort to appear lightly interested.

"Yes," said the other, warming to his theme. "It may seem strange in a rough business man like me,—and I guess it would have played the Old Harry with anybody whose head wasn't perfectly level,—but that strong, pure, sweet face of hers has come between me and many a sharp fellow I've had to deal with. But it never distracted my thoughts; it helped me. The memory of her was with me night and day, Thorny, and it made me a hard, successful worker, and kept me a pure-hearted, happy man. You'll see that I don't need much persuasion to speak to her now!"

While Vibbard was talking, Silverthorn had risen, as if interested, and now stood with his arm

stretched on the cheap, painted wooden mantel-piece above the empty grate of his meagre room. Vibbard noticed that he looked pale ; and it suddenly struck him that his friend might have suffered from poverty, and that his health was perhaps weakening. A gush of the old-time love suddenly came up from his heart, though he said nothing.

“ You know I always told you,” Silverthorn began,—he paused and waited an instant,—“ I always told you she was the woman for you.”

“ Indeed I know it, old boy,” said Vibbard, heartily.

He rose, came to his old college-mate and took hold of his disengaged arm with both hands, affectionately.

“ Look here,” he added ; “ there’s been something queer and dismal about seeing each other, after such a long interval,—something awkward about this settlement between us. If I’ve done anything to hurt your feelings, Thorny, I’m sorry. Let’s make an end of the trouble here and now, and be to each other just as we used to be. What do you say ?”

“ I say you’re a good, true-hearted fellow, as you always were, and I want you to promise that we shall keep up our old feeling forever.”

“ There’s no need of any promise but this,” said Vibbard, as they clasped hands.

“ Now, tell me one thing,” resumed Silverthorn ; “ did it never occur to you, in all these six

years, that I, who have been living in the daily company of the girl you love, might cross your prospect?"

For a second or two Vibbard's eyelids, which fell powerless while he listened, remained shut, and a shock of pain seemed to strike downward from the brain, across his face and through his whole stalwart frame.

"It's your turn to hurt me," he said, slowly, as he looked at his friend again. "Have you any idea how that bare suggestion cut into me?"

"I think I have," said Silverthorn, mechanically. He remained very pale. "But I see, from the way it struck you, that you had never thought of it before. That relieves me. Give me your hand once more, Bill." Then he explained, hurriedly, that he must go to the mill for a few moments. "If I'm not back to tea, don't wait. The girl will come up and give it to you. And mind you don't go over to the Winwoods'" (this with a laugh); "I wish to give them a little warning of your visit."

In a moment he was gone. Vibbard amused himself as well as he could with the books and drawings in the room; then he sat down, looked all about the place, and sighed:

"Poor fellow! he can be more comfortable now."

Before long the tea hour came. Thorny had not returned, and he took the meal alone, watching the sunset out of the window. But by and by he

grew restless, and finally, taking his hat and his cane, which had an odd-shaped handle made of two carved snakes at once embracing and wounding one another, he went out and strolled across the bridge toward the Winwoods'. By the time he reached there dusk had closed in, though the horizon afar off was overhung by a faint, stirring light from the rising moon. He remembered Silverthorn's injunction, however, and would not go into the cottage.

He passed the lilac-hedge, with its half-pathetic exhalations of delicious odor recalling the past, and was prompted to step through a break in the stone wall and ascend the orchard slope.

He stood there a few minutes enjoying the hush of nightfall and exulting in the full tide of happiness and sweet anticipation that streamed silently through his veins. All about him stole up the soft and secret perfumes of the summer's dusk,—perfumes that feel their way through the air like the monitions of early love, going out from one soul to another.

Suddenly, a side-door in the house below was opened, and two figures came forth as if borne upon the flood of genial light that poured itself over the greensward.

They were Silverthorn and Ida.

How graceful they looked, moving together,—the buoyant, beautiful maiden and the slender-shaped young man, who even at a distance impressed one with something ideal in his pose and

motion ! Vibbard looked at them with a bewildered, shadowy sort of pleasure ; but all at once he saw that Silverthorn held Ida's hand in his and had laid his other hand on her shoulder. A frightful tumult of feeling assailed him. The small, carved serpents on his stick seemed suddenly to drive their fangs into his own palm, as he clutched the handle tighter.

For an instant he hesitated and hoped. Then the pair, passing along below the broken wall, came within earshot, and he heard his old boon comrade saying, in a pleading voice :

“ But you have never quite promised me, Ida ! You have never fully engaged yourself to me.”

Partly from a feeling of strangulation, partly with a blind impulse to do something violent, Vibbard clutched himself about the throat, tore furiously at his collar till it gave way, and, in a paroxysm little short of madness, he turned and fled—he did not know where nor how—through the darkness.

It seemed to him for a long time as if he was marching and reeling on through the woods, stumbling over roots and fallen trunks, breaking out into open fields upon the full run, then pursuing a road, or rambling hopelessly down by the ebon-hued river,—and as if he was doing all this with some great and urgent purpose of rescuing somebody from a terrible fate. He must go on foot,—there was no other way,—and everything depended on his getting to a certain point by a certain time.

The worst of it was, he did not know where it was that he must go to ! Then, all at once, he became aware that he had made a mistake. It was not some one else who was to be saved. It was *himself*. He must rescue himself—

From what ?

At this, he came to a pause and tried to think. He stood on a commanding spot, somewhere not far from Stansby, though he could not identify it. The moon was up, and the wide, leafy landscape was spread out in utter silence for miles around him. For a brief space, while collecting his thoughts, he saw everything as it was. Then, as if at the stroke of a wand, horrible deformity appeared to fall upon the whole scene ; the thousand trees below him writhed as if in multitudinous agony ; and, where the thick moonlight touched house or road, or left patches of white on river and pool, there the earth seemed smitten as with leprosy. Silverthorn, reaching his room in an hour after Vibbard had left it, was not at first surprised at his absence. Afterward he grew anxious ; he went out, ran all the way to Winwood's house, and came back, hoping to find that his friend had returned while he was searching for him. He sat down and waited ; he kept awake very late ; his head grew heavy, and he fell asleep in his chair, dreaming with a dull sense of pain, and also of excitement, about his new access of comparative wealth.

A heavy step and the turning of the door-knob

awoke him. Moonlight came in at the window—pale, for the dawn was breaking—and his lamp still flickered on the table. Streaked with these conflicting glimmers, Vibbard stood before him,—his clothes torn, his hat gone, his face pale and fierce.

“What have you been doing?” asked Silverthorn wearily, and without surprise, for he was too much dazed.

“You — *you* !” said Vibbard, hoarsely, pointing sharply at him, as if his livid gaze was not enough.

“You have been taking her from me !”

“Ida ?” queried Silverthorn, with what seemed to the other to be a laughing sneer.

“Are you shameless ?” demanded Vibbard. “Why don’t you lie down there and ask me to forgive you for demanding so little ? I’ve no doubt you are sorry that you couldn’t get the whole of my money ! But I suppose you were afraid you wouldn’t receive even the half, if you told me beforehand what you meant to do.”

Silverthorn was numb from sleeping in a cramped posture and without covering ; but a deeper chill shook him at these words. He tried to get up, but felt too weak, and had to abandon it. He shivered heavily. Then he put his hand carefully into the breast of his coat, and after a moment drew out his pocket-book.

“Here it is,” said he, very quietly. “I came home intending to give you back your money, but you were not here.”

“You expect me to believe that ?” retorted

Vibbard, scornfully, "when I know that you went from here after receiving the check, and—ah! I couldn't have believed it, if I hadn't heard—"

"You overheard us, then? You came, though I warned you not to? And what did you hear?" Silverthorn's lips certainly curled with contempt now.

Vibbard answered: "I heard you pleading with Ida to promise herself to you."

"That's a lie," said Silverthorn, calmly.

"Didn't you say to her, 'You have never yet fully engaged yourself to me?' Weren't you pleading?"

"Yes. I was begging that she would forget all the words of love I had ever spoken, and listen to you when you should come to tell her your story."

Vibbard's head bowed itself in humiliation and wonder. He came forward two or three steps, and sank into a chair.

"Is this possible?" he inquired, at last.

"And you, too, had loved her!"

Silverthorn vouchsafed no reply.

Vibbard, struggling with remorse, uncertainty, and a dimly returning hope, brought himself to speak once more, hesitatingly.

"What did she say?"

"At first she would not tolerate my proposal. I saw there was a conflict in her mind. Something warned me what it was, yet I could not help fancying that she might really be unwilling to give me up. So then I said I had made up my mind any

way, as things stood, to return you your money. I—forgive me, Bill, but it was not treachery to you—only justice to all—I asked her if she would wish to marry me as I was, poor and without a future.”

“And she—” asked Vibbard, trembling. “What did she say?”

Silverthorn let the pocket-book fall, and buried his face in his hands. It was answer enough for his friend.

Vibbard came over and knelt beside him, and tried to rouse him. He stroked his pale brown hair, and called him repeatedly “Dear old boy.”

“Poor Thorny, I wish I could do something for you,” he said, gently. “Are you sure you understood her?”

The other suddenly looked up.

“Don’t blame her, Bill,” he said, beseechingly. “Don’t let it hurt your love for her. There was nothing mercenary. She hesitated a moment—and then I saw that it had all been a dream of the impossible. I had always associated this money with myself. It turned back the whole current of her ideas, and upset everything, when I separated myself from it. All the plans of going away—all that life I had talked of—had to be scattered to the winds in a moment. She did not love me enough, for myself alone!”

“Poor Thorny!” again murmured his friend.

Love, amid all its other resemblances, is like the

spirit of battle. It fires men to press on toward the goal, even though a brother by their side, pushing in the same direction, should fall with a mortal wound. And the fighter goes on, to wed with victory, while his brother lies dead far behind cheated of his bride.

Vibbard offered himself to Ida the next day. It was a strange and distressful wooing; but she could not deny that, in a way unknown to herself till now, she had loved Vibbard from the beginning, more than his friend. In her semi-engagement with Silverthorn, she had probably been loving Vibbard through his friend. But when the strong man, who had gained a place in the world for her sake, returned and placed his heart before her, she could no longer make a mistake.

Silverthorn would not keep the money, neither could his friend persuade him to come and take a share in his business. He would not leave Stansby. Where he had first seen Ida, there he resolved to dwell, with the memory of her.

When I saw him again, and he told me of this crisis, he said :

“I am not ‘poor Thorny,’ as Vibbard called me; for now I have a friendship that will last me through life. It has stood the test of money, and hate, and love, and it is stronger than them all.”

POOR OGLA-MOGA.

BY DAVID D. LLOYD.

I.

IT was a great day when Miss Slopham, so many years conspicuous in our best society, discovered the North American Indian—not for the Indian, perhaps, but certainly for Miss Slopham. Envious and slanderous tongues said that Miss Slopham was afflicted with an ambition. She wanted a mission—not a foreign mission, in any sense of the words. She was debarred from one kind by her sex, and the other involved the possibility of crocodiles and yellow fever, not to mention the chance of being sacrificed to some ugly heathen god. She could not paint, or write, or sing. The stage had never offered any attractions to her, for various reasons, one of which was, so said the same untrustworthy authority, that she had never offered any attractions to the stage. She

was tall and spare, and of a dry and autumnal aspect. She wanted fame, but she wanted it respectable. Therefore it was, said gossip, that this excellent woman turned to philanthropy. Even here her fate was against her. If she had not been a woman, she would have mourned the ill-luck that brought her into the world rather late for the anti-slavery agitation. The malicious rumor, by-the-way, which declared that she wore a bib and tucker at the time of Jackson's war with the United States Bank, was wickedly false. Miss Slopham tried tenement-house reform, but fled before the smells. She had a little practice in the hospitals and orphan asylums, but found the sphere too contracted. She felt that she needed the stimulus of public approval. She was almost in despair, when, as if by accident, her eye lighted on the North American Indian. For centuries he had been chasing the buffalo and the white man, shooting and being shot, taking up the tomahawk and perishing by the rifle, robbing and being robbed, massacring and pillaging whenever massacre and pillage suited his grim humor, and being all this while alternately pampered and starved, cajoled and cheated, by a government which at the same time that it furnished him with guns for shooting its own soldiers, often failed to fulfil the solemn treaties it had made with him.

He had been having this lively and variegated experience for a century or so, without any intimation, prophetic or present, of Miss Slopham's exist-

ence, when that lady discovered him, and when that happened she exclaimed: "He is mine!" Hers, she meant, for the purposes of philanthropy. Wicked tongues had suggested that in Miss Slopham's philanthropy distance lent enchantment to the view.

Only a day or two later, and before she had had time to form any plans, the postman brought a letter with the postmark of St. Louis. It read as follows:

"ST. LOUIS, *October 20, 1881.*

"MY DEAR MISS SLOPHAM,—I want to make an appeal to your benevolence, which I know never fails in case of need. There is in this city at this moment, in hiding, at the house of one of our friends, a poor persecuted Kickapoo. A Kickapoo is an Indian, you know. He has fled from his reservation because, he says, he cannot endure any longer the persecutions and wrongs he has received at the hands of the agent who has charge of the tribe. This agent must be a very bad man. Poor Ogla-Moga—that is his name; it means Young-man-who-digs-up-seed-potatoes-and-feeds-them-to-his-pony, he says, but we call him by his Indian name because it's so much prettier—says that this agent has repeatedly refused to let them go hunting, which is the only amusement the poor things have, on the miserable pretext that the hay must be got in; and he once took away the gun of one of the Kickapoos because he pretended to believe that the man had shot a settler, whereas there was no proof

of it at all, except, Ogla-Moga says, that the man died soon after the gun went off. Ogla-Moga says nothing wounds the self-respect of an Indian so deeply as to take his gun away from him, and we have all felt a great deal of sympathy with that poor insulted Kickapoo. Isn't it a shame that a great government should deliberately and maliciously oppress these unfortunate and high-spirited people?

"But I had almost forgotten what it was that I had to ask. Poor dear Ogla-Moga—he is so quiet and gentle and sad that we have all really grown fond of him—says that it won't be safe for him to stay here: the officers will soon be after him for having left his reservation. Now we have arranged to send him eastward with Mr. Michst. He is the new lecturer before our Ethical Circle, which meets every Sunday in Azure Hall. I read a paper there last Sunday, called, 'Is there Anything?' which Mr. Michst says contains the most triumphant series of negations he ever heard. He says I completely disprove the existence of everything, including many things we all know to be true. My friends in the Circle are begging me to publish it, and I think of doing so, under the title of 'The Everlasting No Indeed.'

"But I am wandering again. When Mr. Michst brings Ogla-Moga to you, can't you get him shelter somewhere? Mr. Michst thinks of taking him on to Washington, so that he may lay the whole matter before the President. We have

all been studying this Indian question for the last ten days, and we are convinced that the whole trouble is that the President doesn't understand it. Mr. Michst feels sure that if the President will give him, say, three days of his time, he can make it perfectly clear to him. Please answer by telegraph.

“Your friend,

“CLARA O. VERRAUGHT.”

Now Miss Slopham lived in a neat and æsthetic apartment in a fashionable apartment-house, and it might have been supposed that she was hardly prepared to set up an asylum for fugitive Kickapoos. But that intrepid woman never faltered. Her answer went whirling by wire before she had paused to think of the ways and means of caring for poor Ogla-Moga.

“October 23.

“*Miss Clara O. Verraught, St. Louis, Missouri :*

“Let him come at once, and send his Indian costumes with him. I have a special reason for this request.

AMELIA SLOPHAM.”

Miss Slopham formed a plan. What it was will presently appear.

II.

Not many mornings after, there was the sound of a strange footstep in Miss Slopham's kitchen, and Bridget emitted a half-shriek. "Mither of Moses! what's that?" It was Ogla-Moga, who had just arrived. His costume was an extraordinary mixture of blanket and trousers and coat, hardly consistent with the requirements of civilization. A broad slouched hat hid his coarse black locks, and cast a friendly shadow over his piercing eyes and swarthy face.

"Here, Bridget," said Miss Slopham, "get some breakfast for this — a — a — gentleman at once." Miss Slopham was not accustomed to meeting Indians in a social way. She hardly knew whether to call him chief; she thought wildly for a moment of sheik; but compromised upon gentleman.

To Bridget's astonishment, her mistress hovered about while the strange dark man gobbled his food and glared upon her with his wild eyes. Still another stranger had come in with them; but this one wore the garments of civilization as if he were used to them. He was a bald young man—in fact, one of the baldest young men that ever was seen. He seemed to be bald all over. He had no ascertainable eyebrows, or eyelashes, or hair, and this, with his bright, fresh complexion and his big spectacles, gave him a very unworldly appearance.

"Oh, Miss Slobham," he said, "I haf been so much mofed wid de story of dis poor Indian ! He iss a shild of nature. He hass been so quiet, and so goot, and so sad ! I haf talked to him by de hour, and he hass not interroopted me vonce. I haf exblained to him the viewss of our Ettical Surkle upon de future state, and he hass listened so attentifely, and ven I haf looked at him I haf found dat he wass asleep. Oh, his sleep wass so benign ! I haf vept ; I could not hellp it. He iss a shild of nature ;" and good Mr. Michst wiped a tear from his eye.

"Good ! good !" grunted Ogla-Moga, as he put a block of beefsteak in his mouth without the formality of a fork.

"He hass eaten all de vay from St. Louis to here, and he never seem to haf enough," said Mr. Michst, in awe, looking at Ogla-Moga very much as one might at the phenomenon of a menagerie.

"Poor creatures ! I've often heard that their supplies were sometimes cut off for months at a time. I suppose this is a case of that kind. Ogla-Moga," said Miss Slopham, addressing him with her most reassuring and eleemosynary smile, "does the government feed you often, you--a--poor Indians ?"

"Not had—what you call it ?—round meal—no, square meal," the Indian replied, making an explanatory parallelogram with his hands, "in four moons."

“ Moonss ?—moonss ? What does he mean by moonss ? ”

Before the lady had time to make sure of her own knowledge on the subject, Ogla-Moga began a wild and mysterious pantomime, which caused Bridget, who had her eye steadily on the strange monster, and kept close to the window as an avenue of desperate retreat, to exclaim : “ Mither of Moses ! what’s the baste going to do ? ” Ogla-Moga was throwing his arm up in the air with a fierce swing, suddenly crooking his elbow, and bringing his closed hand to his mouth, while he rolled his eyes around the room with a melodramatic ferocity, evidently intended to convey the idea of extreme rapture.

“ Poor Ogla-Moga ! ” said Miss Slopham ; “ he wants something to drink. Give him a glass of ice-water, Bridget, and have it perfectly clear. It may remind him of the water he used to drink from the brooks of his far-off forest home ; ” and here Miss Slopham, in her turn, wiped a tear from her eye. Indeed, the crystal particle was apparently so surprised to find itself on the good lady’s cheek that it seemed to disappear of its own accord.

Ogla-Moga looked at the innocent glass of Croton that was handed him with undisguised disdain ; but he swallowed his thoughts, whatever they were, with the water, and signified that his meal was ended.

And now for the first time the extent of the task

she had undertaken became apparent to Miss Slopham. What was to be done with this terrible infant from the prairies during the week of seclusion that her plan made necessary? She lived alone, except for the companionship of Bridget, and it was asking a good deal of a timid and shrinking nature like Miss Slopham's to take into her little household a gentleman who rolled his eyes in such an alarming manner. Then, too, there were the proprieties, against which sins could not be committed even in the name of reform. Yet what else was there to be done? He could not be sent to a hotel: that meant publicity, and perhaps recapture by the emissaries of a cruel and unsympathetic government. She could not ask a friend to take him in. He could not be sent anywhere without danger. Finally a brilliant thought struck her just as she was on the verge of distraction, with Ogla-Moga's big eyes fastened on her all the while. There was the janitor of the apartment-house. He might easily be induced to take a boarder, and he would be discreet. Ogla-Moga could be kept in retirement in his rooms. She would act at once upon the idea. And yet what was she to say? How was she to account for the presence of this stranger in her little household? Ah! he needed clothes. His present costume was an impossible one. She would begin with this subject with the janitor's wife, and feel her way gradually. So she made her way to the top of the house.

It would be hard to say who was in the greatest

flutter when the janitor's door was opened upon her, Miss Slopham, whose maiden bosom was agitated with strange embarrassments, or Mrs. Doherty, who was not accustomed to receive calls from the ladies of the house. The former was so confused that she walked against a chair and knocked it over, gave a little scream, and stepped on the baby, which was sprawling on the floor, whereat the baby screamed, and she screamed, and Mrs. Doherty screamed—all of which did not tend to diminish the mental excitement of either of the ladies, especially as Mrs. Doherty had up to that moment been trying to dust off a chair with one hand while she held another baby with the other arm, and motioned with her head to a little girl—or perhaps she ought to be called a baby—who had charge of still two other babies, to take them out of the room. Poor Miss Slopham thought she had never seen so many babies in her life before, and the spectacle somehow only increased her bewilderment. So perhaps it was not to be wondered at that when she had sunk into a chair she should begin the conversation with the extraordinary and utterly unprecedented question :

“ Oh, Mrs. Doherty, could you—a—could you—a—lend me—a—a pair of pantaloons ? ”

“ A pair of what, Miss Slopham ? ” said the astounded Mrs. Doherty, in a low voice which expressed both the proper deference of the janitor's wife and the natural amazement of the woman.

“ Oh, of course, I—I didn't mean to say that, ”

poor Miss Slopham stammered, in hopeless embarrassment. "The fact is, there's a gentleman down stairs—a friend of mine, you know—he has no home, and very few clothes—and I want to get you to help me. He's down stairs now, and he's going to stay—I don't see how I am going to help it—and I must get a suit of clothes for him this afternoon. I suppose you think this is all very queer," said the poor lady in breathless confusion, with a little nervous laugh, thinking to herself at the same time that it certainly *was* very queer.

"I'm not at all sure that I understand ye, ma'am," said the bewildered woman, looking about her in an alarmed sort of way, as if she wondered whether Miss Slopham was quite a safe woman to be alone with.

"Oh, how can I explain it?" that lady cried, desperately. "Well," she said, drawing a long breath, "let's begin at the beginning. Of course you understand that I don't want any such clothes for myself?"

"No, ma'am, I suppose not," murmured Mrs. Doherty, evidently suspecting that the other was slightly insane.

"Well, I wanted to ask you about them, because I thought your husband might have some clothes he did not want. I'd pay him a good price for them, and they needn't be very good"—and again Miss Slopham struck that terrible snag of the conversation—"I want them for a gentleman who's got into trouble; I can't tell you what it is, but

he's got to keep out of the way of people. And the thing I wanted to ask you most, Mrs. Doherty," she said, in a pleading voice, conscious that she was twisting it all into a sad snarl, "was whether I couldn't get you and Mr. Doherty to take him to board up here with you for a while," and here the good lady sighed a sigh of relief in spite of her misery and confusion. She had at last let the cat out of the bag.

Mrs. Doherty's eyes were growing very large. The man needed new clothes; must have them that afternoon; there was a reason for his keeping out of the way; Miss Slopham would not tell what it was; the man had got into trouble. The idea grew bigger and bigger in Mrs. Doherty's mind, until at last it burst out with,

"But is it a jail-bird ye've got there, ma'am?"

"No, no," cried Miss Slopham, badly frightened in her turn at the other's fear. "How could you think such a thing? He's a gentleman, you know; quite an important man where he comes from. There are reasons why I can't tell you who he is. He doesn't want anybody to know it either. But a jail-bird! why, wait till you see him, Mrs. Doherty. He looks so gentle, and he's really handsome."

Mrs. Doherty looked at Miss Slopham. Miss Slopham was a wealthy tenant, and paid a large rent, and Mrs. Doherty was only the janitor's wife. But, after all, Mrs. Doherty was a woman, and Miss Slopham was a woman also, and Mrs. Do-

herty looked at Miss Slopham in the way in which only a woman can look at another woman ; looked at her gray and withered curls, and at her face, which had never, in the spring-time of Miss Slopham's youth, been the kind of face which painters celebrate and poets embalm in verse, and said nothing. What she may have thought, or whether she thought anything, was a matter of little consequence, for when the richer lady came to mention the terms at which she rated the hospitality of the Doherty household, Mrs. Doherty showed a positive anxiety to oblige her, and even murmured something about being glad to do anything in their power for such a kind lady.

Now began a week of agony for Miss Slopham. Oglamoga was duly installed in the Doherty apartment, and duly invested with a suit of Mr. Doherty's clothes. But the taste for roving was still strong upon him. The inner life of an apartment-house seemed to arouse all his savage curiosity, and the fact that the entrance to every apartment looked like the entrance to every other apartment gave rise to some disagreeable complications. In the second floor front, for example, a skirmish with a view to matrimony had long been in progress between the daughter of the family, Miss Josephine Ayr, and Mr. Margent, of the young and prosperous stock-broking firm of Margent & Bar, and the decisive engagement was plainly near at hand. The progress of the acquaintanceship had been watched with an interest not altogether

friendly by the second floor back, while Miss Slopham had deigned to catch such neutral and impartial glimpses of it as she could over the stairs from the third floor front. In fact, the second floor back, who bore the name of Pound, had in an unguarded moment introduced Mr. Margent to the second floor front, and had then in silent rage seen him borne away from them by Miss Josephine. Perhaps this was to be accounted for by the fact that the two marriageable daughters in the second floor back had been offered, to use the coarse expression of the young stock-broker, "with no takers" for a series of years, and perhaps by the bold and shocking manners of Miss Josephine, which were often the subject of remark in the Pound household, where the opinion was frequently heard that it was difficult to understand how old Mrs. Ayr could keep so cheerful with a daughter whose behavior was the scandal of all her acquaintances. By one of those unaccountable coincidences which will occur in apartment-houses, the remarks of the Ayr's about the Pounds were repeated to the Pounds, while at the same time the remarks of the Pounds about the Ayr's were repeated to the Ayr's, the result being that Miss Josephine said that it must be a great satisfaction to Mrs. Pound to feel that she would probably always have her daughters with her, especially as they were already of an age to have many tastes in common with her, and the Misses Pound said that it was truly painful to see people who had once been very

wealthy reduced in circumstances, like the Ayrs, for example, and that both families were carefully polite when they met.

Now Mr. Margent was thought to be on the point of declaring himself, and when he appeared one afternoon his intentions were obvious. He was, if possible, more scrupulously dressed than ever. His clothes, trimly cut in the latest style, were new and spotless. His plump, not to say puffy, face, of an overfed white, was as smooth-shaven as ever. His plentiful watch-chain and his elegant shoes and his expensive stockings were, if possible, more plentiful and elegant and expensive than ever. When Miss Josephine appeared in a fresh costume, his small gray eyes revolved about her with an appearance of sluggish satisfaction which for him was almost animation.

"Business," said he—"business 's been splendid this year. Tip-top. C. B. & Q. brought us in ten thousand at one clip the other day. Fact;" and Mr. Margent paused for a fresh supply of ideas.

"How nice that is!" said Miss Josephine, gently, with a shade of tender appreciation in her voice.

"But it costs a dreadful deal to live. We all live at hotels, you know—all the boys. And then a fellow has to have his cab: all the boys have cabs. And then we've got to have clothes. But I'm economizing on that. I cut myself down to twenty suits last year. I don't see any use of a fellow's having more than twenty suits;" and

Mr. Margent paused again, intellectually out of breath.

"I think you're a very extravagant creature," said the charming Miss Josephine, playfully shaking her finger at him. "If you had a wife to take care of you, you wouldn't be allowed to spend so much money." "Well, do you know, I've been thinking of getting married. I was talking with the boys about it the other day. I said I believed a man could support a wife on seven thousand a year—keeping a fellow's cab, and staying at the hotel, you know, and all that sort of thing"—he hastened to add, with a little anxiety in his voice. "The boys bet I couldn't, and I bet I could, and I believe it was then that I really made up my mind to get married. Don't you believe it could be done on that?" Mr. Margent found himself the subject of a suffusion of ideas, and had the appearance of being surprised at his own gifts.

Miss Josephine was of the opinion, in a low voice, and with an expression of intense interest in the lace in her sleeve, that it could be done for that.

"Well, now," said the ardent youth, moving over to the sofa where she was sitting, and settling himself down beside her, "why shouldn't we get married? You're just the kind of girl I like—tip-top, you know. I like a girl with style about her. Come, say yes." And here the crude outlines of something like a joke, for the first time in Mr. Margent's history, began to be visible to him

in the dim recesses of his obese mind. "Let's make it buyer sixty days," and he laughed until his small eyes almost closed.

"And what's buyer sixty days, you horrid man?"

"Why, don't you know that? I should have thought you'd know that. It's when the buyer has sixty days to call for the stock. Let's get married in sixty days, and we'll invite all the boys."

Poor Miss Josephine! Was this her romance? She had not counted on much—but was this all? She was a sensible and practical girl, however, and the instructions of an excellent mother had not been lost upon her. She yielded herself to the embrace of this winsome wooer, her head drooped upon his shoulder, and he was just about to collect the dividend of a kiss, when the hall door swung open with a crash, and no other than Ogla-Moga plunged into the room, with a bundle intended for Miss Slopham. It was Ogla-Moga's unfortunate peculiarity that all floors were alike to him, and likewise all interiors. He stood in the dark hallway glaring with amazement upon the bewildered couple. Miss Josephine screamed, and Mr. Margent swore with actual animation. Ogla-Moga grew still more excited. He had learned enough of civilized life to know that strangers and intruders were objects of suspicion.

"G'out! g'out!" he roared, with his voice at prairie pitch. "G'out! or I put you out!"

Miss Josephine screamed again ; her estimable mother rushed in by the door leading to the bedrooms, followed by three children, all beside themselves with curiosity and wonder, and Mr. Ayr himself appeared in the doorway leading to the dining-room, in a state of respectable consternation ; and last of all appeared the heads of the two Misses Pound in the hallway outside, uttering simultaneously, with many deprecatory little bobs, the same words, to the effect that they thought perhaps some one was hurt, all of which only increased the wrath of Oglamoga, more than ever convinced that something was wrong.

“ You no belong here ! ” he cried, swinging his arms wildly about. “ This wigwam belongs gray squaw ! ”

Miss Josephine always persisted in believing that Oglamoga had first gone to the Pound door, and that the Misses Pound, who knew only too well that Mr. Margent was calling upon her, had sent him to the other. But if it were true, she had a real woman’s revenge. She had no sooner descried them in the doorway than with wonderful presence of mind she fainted straight into Mr. Margent’s arms, much to that gentleman’s astonishment. It was a master-stroke. The Misses Pound disappeared as suddenly as if they had been pictures from a magic lantern, and had been slid off the screen. Mrs. Ayr at once looked more cheerful, and Mr. Ayr began an insane effort to remove Oglamoga from the premises, in which it would have

gone ill with him had it not been for a sudden vision of curl-papers and gray hair behind the Indian. His name was called in a voice he was accustomed to hear, he turned away, the door was banged to upon his heels, and the tableau closed.

The very next day Mrs. Gottom of the third floor back was to give a dinner party to the distinguished Italian musician, Signor Barbazzo. Mrs. Gottom was known among the irreverent young men of her acquaintance as "the menagerie woman." Her favorite exclamation was, "I must have a fresh lion," and visitors to her apartment were always sure of beholding the latest leonine specimens landed on these shores. Signor Barbazzo's freshness made him a *rarus leo*. He was famous, and all the world was waiting for him, but he had not yet appeared in public. As a cruel fate would have it, Mrs. Gottom fell sick the very day set for the dinner, and was compelled to resign her place as hostess to her pretty and simple-hearted niece, Miss Tristan, who had never seen Signor Barbazzo. As fate would also have it, that gentleman himself fell sick, and being in the habit of doing as he pleased among the barbarians of the West, sent no excuses. As fate would still have it, Oglamoga, taking the wrong door as usual, strolled into Mrs. Gottom's drawing-room, which happened to be empty, about an hour before dinner, settled himself in a luxurious arm-chair in the middle of the room, and—fell asleep. Half an hour later,

pretty Miss Tristan came rustling into the room with her coolest and sweetest dress on. She gave a start of surprise when she saw a man there, stepped forward, thinking that it was the distinguished guest himself, stopped again, seeing that he was fast asleep, and then taking a swift woman's glance at him, sped softly out of the room.

"Aunt, what do you think?" said she, breathlessly, running into that lady's room. "Signor Barbazzo is in the parlor, sound asleep in the big chair!"

"What are you saying, child? Signor Barbazzo in the parlor asleep! Nonsense!"

"But it must be he. Who else can it be? Hasn't he got long black hair?"

"Yes. And no beard or mustache? and a swarthy complexion?"

"Yes, yes."

"Well," said the aunt, wearily, "I suppose he has come in tired. Doing what he pleases, as they all do. But he mustn't be disturbed, on any account. I wish I was there to manage him. The other day at Mrs. Vicar's he went away in the middle of the dinner because the macaroni wasn't right. He'll do something dreadful, I suppose. Now be sure. *Don't* begin by making him cross. So if he should sleep an hour, keep the people quiet at all hazards, and let him sleep two hours if he wants to."

Poor Miss Tristan went back to the post of duty oppressed with a great responsibility. The servant

was stationed at the door to prevent any ringing of the bell, and as the guests came in one by one, they were warned in whispers not to rouse the sleeping lion. Very soon Mrs. Gottom's drawing-room presented a striking example of the homage due to genius. The guests stood about in little groups, conversing in the most timid whispers, and even making signs take the place of language, glancing every moment at the supposed great man in the chair, who had his legs stretched out before him, his head thrown back, and was, if it must be confessed, snoring audibly, not to say visibly. There was Professor Phyle, the celebrated phrenologist—a tall man, with a gaunt face and long gray hair. He had been a lion once, but was now out of date. There were also present Mrs. Blenkin, a comparatively new soprano, having seen only two seasons ; Lieutenant Wray, a lion just caught, or rather polar bear, having only then returned from a trip to the arctic regions, in which his ship had covered itself with glory ; a young lady who had written a novel, and another who had written a poem, both unpublished, but both understood to be of a mysterious excellence ; and others not necessary to mention. Even for these great people the chance to see a genius off his guard was not to be resisted. He seemed to be so soundly asleep that they might safely approach him. They tiptoed toward him, and hovered about him, holding their breath meanwhile. The ladies gazed at him longest, and seemed best satisfied with their in-

spection, with the exception of Professor Phyle, who was in raptures.

"I have never," said he, in a blood-curdling whisper, and waving his hand toward the unconscious Ogla-Moga, while the guests gathered about to hear what his verdict would be, "seen a more distinctly musical face. It is remarkable. It ought to convert any skeptic to phrenology. The development of what we phrenologists call, for the sake of convenience, the organs of tune and time—just over and near the side of the eye—the fulness of the eyes, the exquisite mobility of the mouth, are fairly abno-or-r-mal," and here the learned professor's whisper made one's flesh creep. "And I have no doubt, if I could examine the organs which are concealed by those luxuriant locks"—and now the professor smiled his society smile, and his fingers rayed out toward the sleeping Indian's head in a nervous, eager way—"that I should find ideality, adhesiveness, time, hope, veneration, and so on, strongly developed, as in the case of the great composers." The ladies nodded at each other, and drew long breaths of astonishment.

"I am glad," continued the professor, in his most approving manner, "that this little social incident"—but now the smile was more labored, and his eyebrows went up with less ease than usual, for, to tell the truth, the professor, like the rest of the company, was getting a little hungry—"should have given us an opportunity to make a scientific proof of his great genius."

Meanwhile the lieutenant, who was a practical person, if he was a lion, bent toward the still snoring Ogla-Moga with his eyeglass.

"It's a singular thing," said he, coming back, "but the face doesn't seem at all Italian to me. It's more like an Indian's face than that of any civilized man I ever saw."

There was an indignant whisper of dissent all about.

"How can you say so?" responded the professor. "There are centuries of culture and refinement in that face—the stern old Roman cast softened and modified by generation after generation of the artistic training and cultivation of modern Italy. I would venture to assert from this mere glance at his face that his fathers before him for a long way back were musicians, and I would pick him out from a crowd on Broadway as a genius in music. Why," said the professor, with as much of a flourish as he could get into a whisper, "his very nostrils convict him."

It must be said that at that particular moment Ogla-Moga's nostrils were convicting him of a genius for music of a most discordant kind. He was snoring a profound snore whose chords could not be found in Beethoven or Rossini, nor even in Liszt or Wagner. Just as the professor finished his eulogy, there came a terrific rumble and rattle, and the Indian snored so loud that he fairly woke himself up. He raised himself up in the chair and looked about in speechless amazement. No one

spoke. All were waiting, with the deference due to genius, to see what the great man would do, and were, at the same time, if it must be confessed, a little overcome with the novelty of the situation. His black eye ran quickly from one to the other, when it fell upon the uniform of Lieutenant Wray, assumed on that occasion by the express wish of his hostess. At that sight, which must have recalled to Ogla-Moga's mind the power and authority of the Government of the United States, a look of terror blanched his face, and darting up, he fled through the open door into the hall, and disappeared, leaving behind him the impression that the eccentricity of distinguished Italian musicians is past finding out.

III.

OF many other of the deeds of Ogla-Moga—of how he imprisoned three estimable old ladies in the elevator, and before they were released had frightened them into hysterics ; of how he at first took the milkman to be a brother Indian, and regularly for a time answered his morning howl with a terrifying war-whoop ; of how he kept the house in turmoil by ringing an electric bell wherever he could find one, in doing which he took a childish delight—there is no need to speak here. Happily for Miss Slopham, it so came about that Ogla-Moga was rescued from all his scrapes without the

responsibility for him being traced to her, and without her secret being discovered, although many complaints poured into the office of the carelessness by which strange and dreadful men were allowed to get into the house—a subject, however, on which the landlord could never get any satisfactory information from Mr. Doherty. Happily for Miss Slopham again, the week of trial was almost ended. She had issued invitations to a reception for a Thursday evening, at which she caused it to be understood a paper would be read upon an important reform question. Many of her friends in the apartment-house were included in the bidding to this feast of reason. The evening had arrived, and she was seated in her reception-room, talking to the first-comer—a very tall and grave gentleman with solemn long hair. This was Mr. Blagg, the well-known newspaper correspondent. He was a most ingenious and laborious writer. Having accumulated a certain amount of information, he wrote it out on Monday to a paper in the far West, and on Tuesday to another paper in the far East, varying the mixture somewhat, and on Wednesday varying it again to a paper in the North, and on Thursday to a paper in the South, giving the kaleidoscope of gossip still another shake. If it be true that a stamp of the foot displaces every atom of the globe, and that a word, once spoken, never ceases to reverberate through the universe, the intellectual atmosphere must have been disorganized with the clash and confusion of

Mr. Blagg's contributions to contemporary history. But Mr. Blagg was also a general literary workman. He took contracts to write articles, pamphlets, and books, as a lawyer takes cases—not on their merits, but for the fee. If it must be admitted, he had written Miss Slopham's paper on the wrongs of the Indian, for a pecuniary compensation, for that lady was far from being a literary person.

"Oh, it is so strong, Mr. Blagg," she was saying, "so noble, and the array of facts is so overwhelming! Where did you get them? Oh, what a power your pen is!"

"Such as it is, Miss Slopham, it is always at your service;" and Mr. Blagg closed his eyes in a faint ecstasy. Unlike literary persons as a class, he was not reluctant to be openly appreciated. "As for the facts," he continued, "they were easily secured. I had occasion to write another article on the Indian question, taking an exactly opposite view, and I found that many of the facts, in the hands of a skilful artist, could be used in both articles. I have often found that plan beneficial. It economizes labor, gives exercise to all the intellectual faculties, and, where one can secure orders for a brace of documents to contradict each other, is, I may say"—and here Mr. Blagg coughed a little cough—"pleasant to the pocket."

"But I want your help still further, dear Mr. Blagg. We must make this poor Indian's cause our own. We must agitate the matter. I hope

that when this paper has been read to-night" (and Miss Slopham looked down at the roll in her lap), "you will be willing to write something about it to your papers. I want the influence of your pen to rouse the country."

"I'll do what my pen enables me to do, Miss Slopham ; and I will say that I think it is not without its effect," replied Mr. Blagg, with the conscious pride of a man who knew that public opinion would never get itself properly moulded without his help.

"It will be painful for us, of course, to be involved in anything like notoriety, but" (and now a shade of lofty resignation passed over the lady's face), "we must bear it for the sake of the cause." Miss Slopham already called it "the cause."

But the company had begun to assemble. Mr. Michst was there, having deprived the Ethical Circle of the benefit of his ministrations for an entire week in order to be present. Mr. and Mrs. Ayr were there, with Miss Josephine and her lover, who was heard to remark that this would be "great larks to tell the boys." The Misses Pound were also there, conveying in their looks their profound pity for a young man so sadly ensnared. Mrs. Gottom was there, with her pretty niece, who looked, as really pretty girls always do, prettier than ever. Professor Phyle was there, and Mrs. Blenkin. But Lieutenant Wray had not been able to accept Miss Slopham's invitation. There were

besides a considerable number of persons of limited celebrity, most of them fierce hobby riders, who, instead of leaving those unruly animals at home in their luxurious stalls, or outside of their friends' houses, as the instinct of politeness might have suggested, rode them boldly into the parlors of the best society, and ran them at full gallop into the midst of any conversation, so that often no sound could be heard but the noise of their hoofs. Of the number and kind of these hobbies there is no need here to speak, but when there were so many gathered into a single place, the neighing and snorting, the champing of conversational bits, and the pounding of huge and heavy feet were curious to behold and to hear.

And Ogla - Moga? Now the native costumes were coming into play, and Miss Slopham's long martyrdom was to have its reward. She had conveyed to the Indian her desire that he should discard the garments of civilization, and array himself in those of his pristine barbarity. Remembering also that an Indian toilet is not complete without a good deal of decorative art, she lent him a collection of artists' materials kept for purposes of æsthetic display, and explained to him how to use them. The result was that when he emerged he was a sight to strike terror into any heart. His robes became him fiercely, and the blazonry of his colors even frightened her a little. She began to wonder whether, after all, Indian reform might not be a dangerous pursuit. But all this was accom-

plished, in her haste, three hours before the time of the reception. What was to be done with him in the mean time? He must needs sit and wait, like the ladies in the olden time who on the occasion of some great fête were obliged, through the multiplicity of the hair-dresser's engagements, to pass under his hands early in the morning, perhaps, and then to sit like statues all day lest the lofty and beautiful structure on their heads should tumble into ruins. But how restrain him—this untutored Kickapoo? In her desperation a wild and wonderful scheme occurred to her. He had become savagely fond of raspberry jam. She would offer him a bribe of an unlimited quantity of this delicacy to go into some room and stay there, and once there, she would quietly lock the door. She canvassed in her mind all the rooms in her little box of a home. There was one, convenient, appropriate, and secure—the store-room. No sooner said than done. To see this fierce-looking Kickapoo clad in robes of savagery, and gleaming in all the paint of the war-path, seated on Miss Slop-ham's refrigerator, and looking about on either side with barbaric curiosity at her array of shelves of jars and bottles, while he ate raspberry jam out of a rare and elegant saucer with an exquisite silver spoon, might have seemed a ludicrous spectacle to anybody less austere than Miss Slop-ham. But she only gave a sigh of relief, and softly turned the key, and went away to prepare for her guests. Ogla-Moga did not miss her. He

finished the saucer of jam, and finished the jar, and then began explorations. He found various relishes, condiments, and preserves, and what not, all of which he tasted, some of which he enjoyed, and some of which he seemed to objurgate in choice Kickapoo. At last—for his terrific figure was now erect on the refrigerator—he saw something that sent a gleam of joy across his fiery face. It was a dark bottle that bore an inscription which he could not read, “S. O. P. Brandy.” But there is one sense which needs no education. He pulled out the cork, and put the mouth of the bottle to his nostrils; then he smiled grimly, and straightway sat down on the refrigerator.

The time had arrived for Miss Slopham to read her paper. Mr. Michst claimed the attention of the company by tapping on a table with a paper-knife. “Laties and shentlemen,” said he, “we haf come here dis efening as drue philossofphers—not for our own selfish bleasure enti-er-lee, but”—Mr. Margent looked uneasy, and fidgeted in his chair—“in order to hellp in de solution of one of de great questions of de day—de Indian question. I haf met some off dese obbressed and drowndrodden beoble. I know how amiable, how excellent, they are—like little shildren dey haf lissened to me ven I haf talked to dem of de *aura* of Schrellenbach and de ofersoul—all vunder, and, I know, all pelief. But I vill not take down de time. My young and pyootiful friend, Miss Slobham” (the good, loyal man was sadly near-sighted), “vill

read to you, and I belief she vill have some derrible dings to say.'"

Terrible things indeed ! Miss Slopham's manuscript ran with gore—the gore of the red-man always. Massacres, surprises, and butcheries, in which the white man had slaked, only to renew it, his notorious thirst for Indian blood, followed each other across the pages of the paper, leaving each a darkening trail behind. The government of these United States, which, in the inconsistent, uncontinuous, and often bungling way of all governments, has probably tried to do its duty by the Indian—often succeeding only in making its benevolence a source of pauperism, and often betrayed by unfaithful officials and corrupt citizens into shameful acts of bad faith—was portrayed as a huge ogre, a giant Blunderbore, drinking Indian blood from two-quart bowls, and never breakfasting but on Indian baby. Meantime there filed through Miss Slopham's flowing sentences, like a procession of children with banners, the mild and faithful Modoc, the unsophisticated Sioux, the exemplary Pi-Ute, the large-eyed and pensive Pottawattamie, the Polished Nez-Percé, the amiable Pawnee, the meek and unobtrusive Ogallala, and the playful Apache. If there ever had been a massacre by Indians, or an act of savage cruelty by other than white men, it was not found necessary for the purposes of this paper to mention it. Perhaps emphasis is indispensable in advocating reforms, and Indian reforms are surely needed. At

all events, there was no lack of accentuation in Miss Slopham's paper. The little audience murmured to each other of its literary skill, and noticed that Mr. Blagg, who was a high authority, wore an approving smile.

"And now," she read, as she approached the end of the essay, "we have felt that there could be no better way to enlist the sympathies of practical men and women than to show them one of these unfortunate people as he is at home, in his native dress, in the picturesque pigments which he delights, in his innocent and child-like fancy, to adorn himself with, and to let you see how far he is from being the wretch he is represented to be, how clearly the natural mildness of his disposition, when unvexed by the tyranny of governments, shines through the manly beauty of his countenance. It has so happened that one of these poor creatures has been placed for a time under my charge" (and here a look of dawning suspicion began to appear simultaneously upon the faces of Miss Ayr and Miss Tristan), "and I shall be able to summon him in a few moments into your presence, and beg you to render, in behalf of this simple and suffering race, the kind yet impartial testimony of your own eyes. I ask this because"—

But what was this strange noise in the distance that made Miss Slopham pause in her reading, and sent a pallor across her cheek?—a sound as of the dragging of a heavy body through the private hallway leading from her kitchen—a sound as of a

struggle, and of scuffling and heavy breathing, and loud mutterings. It flashed upon her in an instant that she had forgotten the little window in the store-room. Had Ogla-Moga escaped? What had happened?

But she made an effort and resumed: "I ask this because—"

"Mither of Moses! what are ye a-doin'? Let go me hair, or I'll scrame for the perlice;" and forthwith there went up just outside of the drawing-room door a scream in the unmistakable voice of Bridget, which must have reached the traditionally absent policeman, no matter how far he was away.

The company had now started to their feet in astonishment and fright.

"Queltzcoatchstepukulistini!" — or that was what the response sounded like.

Another scream from Bridget.

"Akuishnapaccademipechacquinishcrekepa!"

In another instant an extraordinary group reeled into the doorway—Ogla-Moga, with his robes torn and spattered, his paint smeared out of its original lines and colors, and his face furrowed with scratches inflicted by the hands of Bridget—Ogla-Moga drunk, utterly drunk, and brandishing in the air a glittering carving-knife; and Bridget—alas! drunk too—with her hair in the firm grasp of the Indian, who was pulling her along.

There was a universal shriek of horror. Three of the ladies bolted through the only door which the Indian did not occupy, and which opened into

a small bedroom. They frantically pulled it shut, just as three other ladies seized the knob on the outside and tried to pull it open. As luck would have it, Miss Ayr and her mother and Mrs. Blenkin were on the inside, and the two Misses Pound were on the outside—a fact which did not seem to diminish the natural anxiety of the ladies on either side of the door for their personal safety. At all events, the tug of war went on. Mr. Blagg showed extreme terror, and being plainly reduced by the same to a state of utter intellectual confusion and imbecility, made an insane attempt to scale the heights of a large what-not in the corner of the room, which, of course, promptly came over with him, hurling him to the floor with great violence, and falling directly upon him, while it covered his body and the larger part of the floor with the fragments of unprecedented teapots and alleged salad-bowls. Mrs. Gottom and her niece barricaded themselves in the corner with a sofa, and armed themselves with huge photograph albums to be hurled at the enemy ; while Professor Phyle, who was a prominent member of the Peace Society, quietly stepped into the window recess, and drew the curtains in defence of his person and his principles.

In the midst of the turmoil and dismay, Miss Tristan was heard to exclaim, “ Oh, aunty, it is Signor Barbazzo ! ” and her aunt was heard to reply, with singular feeling, “ Hold your tongue, child, and never speak to me again as long as you

live !” There was a marked rustle of the curtains in front of Professor Phyle at this episode. Meantime Mr. Michst, with a blind idea of doing something, without knowing in the least what it ought to be, had confronted the Indian, who still stood there muttering and shaking his knife. Just then he gave a terrible tug at Bridget’s hair, that imparted a projectile motion to her as he swung her away from him. Her lowered head struck Mr. Michst with full force in the neighborhood of the diaphragm, and the two went down on the floor with a crash. Mr. Margent, the first to recover his presence of mind, stepped over the extended toes of Miss Slopham, who had simply dropped into a chair in a dead faint, firmly seized the Indian’s right hand, in which the knife was held, and putting his other hand on the Indian’s shoulder, gently and easily tripped him up, and when he had got him down sat on his prostrate form. It had hardly been done when a dark little man slipped into the room, cast a swift glance around, and without stopping to look his astonishment, in a flash locked a pair of handcuffs on Ogla-Moga’s wrists. In the hall outside was a vision of two policemen.

Mr. Margent, without betraying the least surprise, slowly got up, pulled a toothpick out of his pocket, and began to use it, while he looked down upon the Indian. “What’s he done ?” he asked, coolly.

“Oh, all sorts of things : killed a missionary ;

poured a can of kerosene on his squaw, and tried to set her on fire, because he wanted to take another one ; and so on. The worst Kickapoo of the lot. I've had hard work to find him ; but," with a grin, "I never expected to find him in a place like this."

Ogla-Moga had fallen asleep then and there ! The harsh music of his snore filled the room. To several persons present it had a familiar sound. Professor Phyle, who had stuck his head out of the curtains, drew it in again suddenly, like the timid turtle.

"Poor Ogla-Moga !" said Miss Slopam, who had recovered, and had been listening. "What else could be expected under a cruel and despotic government ?"

"Ogla-Moga ? Yes, ma'am, that's his name among the tribe. I'm the agent's deputy. We called him Ugly-Mug, and that was the way the Indians pronounced it. It *is* ugly, you see, ma'am."

It *was* ugly. It was the last blow. Miss Slopam said not another word, and, strange to say, Mr. Blagg never mentioned these interesting incidents in his correspondence.

A MEMORABLE MURDER.

BY CELIA THAXTER.

AT the Isles of Shoals, on the 5th of March in the year 1873, occurred one of the most monstrous tragedies ever enacted on this planet. The sickening details of the double murder are well known; the newspapers teemed with them for months: but the pathos of the story is not realized; the world does not know how gentle a life these poor people led, how innocently happy were their quiet days. They were all Norwegians. The more I see of the natives of this far-off land, the more I admire the fine qualities which seem to characterize them as a race. Gentle, faithful, intelligent, God-fearing human beings, they daily use such courtesy toward each other and all who come in contact with them, as puts our ruder Yankee manners to shame. The men and women living on this lonely island were like the sweet, honest, simple folk we read of in Björnson's charming Norwegian stories,

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full of kindly thoughts and ways. The murdered Anethe might have been the Eli of Björnson's beautiful Arne or the Ragnhild of Boyesen's lovely romance. They rejoiced to find a home just such as they desired in this peaceful place; the women took such pleasure in the little house which they kept so neat and bright, in their flock of hens, their little dog Ringe, and all their humble belongings! The Norwegians are an exceptionally affectionate people; family ties are very strong and precious among them. Let me tell the story of their sorrow as simply as may be.

Louis Wagner murdered Anethe and Karen Christensen at midnight on the 5th of March, two years ago this spring. The whole affair shows the calmness of a practiced hand; *there was no malice in the deed*, no heat; it was one of the coolest instances of deliberation ever chronicled in the annals of crime. He admits that these people had shown him nothing but kindness. He says in so many words, "They were my best friends." They looked upon him as a brother. Yet he did not hesitate to murder them. The island called Smutty-Nose by human perversity (since in old times it bore the pleasanter title of Haley's Island) was selected to be the scene of this disaster. Long ago I lived two years upon it, and know well its whitened ledges and grassy slopes, its low thickets of wild-rose and bayberry, its sea-wall still intact, connecting it with the small island Malaga, opposite Appledore, and the ruined break-water which links it with Cedar

Island on the other side. A lonely cairn, erected by some long ago forgotten fishermen or sailors, stands upon the highest rock at the southeastern extremity; at its western end a few houses are scattered, small, rude dwellings, with the square old Haley house near; two or three fish-houses are falling into decay about the water-side, and the ancient wharf drops stone by stone into the little cove, where every day the tide ebbs and flows and ebbs again with pleasant sound and freshness. Near the houses is a small grave-yard, where a few of the natives sleep, and not far, the graves of the fourteen Spaniards lost in the wreck of the ship *Sagunto* in the year 1813. I used to think it was a pleasant place, that low, rocky, and grassy island, though so wild and lonely.

From the little town of Laurvig, near Christiania, in Norway, came John and Maren Hontvet to this country, and five years ago took up their abode in this desolate spot, in one of the cottages facing the cove and Appledore. And there they lived through the long winters and the lovely summers, John making a comfortable living by fishing, Maren, his wife, keeping as bright and tidy and sweet a little home for him as man could desire. The bit of garden they cultivated in the summer was a pleasure to them; they made their house as pretty as they could with paint and paper and gay pictures, and Maren had a shelf for her plants at the window; and John was always so good to her, so kind and thoughtful of her comfort and of what would please

her, she was entirely happy. Sometimes she was a little lonely, perhaps, when he was tossing afar off on the sea, setting or hauling his trawls, or had sailed to Portsmouth to sell his fish. So that she was doubly glad when the news came that some of her people were coming over from Norway to live with her. And first, in the month of May, 1871, came her sister Karen, who stayed only a short time with Maren, and then came to Appledore, where she lived at service two years, till within a fortnight of her death. The first time I saw Maren she brought her sister to us, and I was charmed with the little woman's beautiful behavior; she was so gentle, courteous, decorous, she left on my mind a most delightful impression. Her face struck me as remarkably good and intelligent, and her gray eyes were full of light.

Karen was a rather sad-looking woman, about twenty-nine years old; she had lost a lover in Norway long since, and in her heart she fretted and mourned for this continually: she could not speak a word of English at first, but went patiently about her work and soon learned enough, and proved herself an excellent servant, doing faithfully and thoroughly everything she undertook, as is the way of her people generally. Her personal neatness was most attractive. She wore gowns made of cloth woven by herself in Norway, a coarse blue stuff, always neat and clean, and often I used to watch her as she sat by the fire spinning at a spinning-wheel brought from her own country; she

made such a pretty picture, with her blue gown and fresh white apron, and the nice, clear white muslin bow with which she was in the habit of fastening her linen collar, that she was very agreeable to look upon. She had a pensive way of letting her head droop a little sideways as she spun, and while the low wheel hummed monotonously, she would sit crooning sweet, sad old Norwegian airs by the hour together, perfectly unconscious that she was affording such pleasure to a pair of appreciative eyes. On the 12th of October, 1872, in the second year of her stay with us, her brother, Ivan Christensen, and his wife, Anethe Mathea, came over from their Norseland in an evil day, and joined Maren and John at their island, living in the same house with them.

Ivan and Anethe had been married only since Christmas of the preceding year. Ivan was tall, light-haired, rather quiet and grave. Anethe was young, fair, and merry, with thick, bright sunny hair, which was so long it reached, when unbraided, nearly to her knees ; blue-eyed, with brilliant teeth and clear, fresh complexion, beautiful, and beloved beyond expression by her young husband, Ivan. Mathew Hontvet, John's brother, had also joined the little circle a year before, and now Maren's happiness was complete. Delighted to welcome them all, she made all things pleasant for them, and she told me only a few days ago, "I never was so happy in my life as when we were all living there together." So they abode in peace and quiet, with

not an evil thought in their minds, kind and considerate toward each other, the men devoted to their women and the women repaying them with interest, till out of the perfectly cloudless sky one day a bolt descended, without a whisper of warning, and brought ruin and desolation into that peaceful home.

Louis Wagner, who had been in this country seven years, appeared at the Shoals two years before the date of the murder. He lived about the islands during that time. He was born in Ueckermünde, a small town of lower Pomerania, in Northern Prussia. Very little is known about him, though there were vague rumors that his past life had not been without difficulties, and he had boasted foolishly among his mates that "not many had done what he had done and got off in safety;" but people did not trouble themselves about him or his past, all having enough to do to earn their bread and keep the wolf from the door. Maren describes him as tall, powerful, dark, with a peculiarly quiet manner. She says she never saw him drunk—he seemed always anxious to keep his wits about him: he would linger on the outskirts of a drunken brawl, listening to and absorbing everything, but never mixing himself up in any disturbance. He was always lurking in corners, lingering, looking, listening, and he would look no man straight in the eyes. She spoke, however, of having once heard him disputing with some sailors, at table, about some point of navigation; she did not understand

it, but all were against Louis, and, waxing warm, all strove to show him he was in the wrong. As he rose and left the table she heard him mutter to himself with an oath, "I know I'm wrong, but I'll never give in!" During the winter preceding the one in which his hideous deed was committed he lived at Star Island and fished alone, in a wherry; but he made very little money, and came often over to the Hontvets, where Maren gave him food when he was suffering from want, and where he received always a welcome and the utmost kindness. In the following June he joined Hontvet in his business of fishing, and took up his abode as one of the family at Smutty-Nose. During the summer he was "crippled," as he said, by the rheumatism, and they were all very good to him, and sheltered, fed, nursed and waited upon him the greater part of the season. He remained with them five weeks after Ivan and Anethe arrived, so that he grew to know Anethe as well as Maren, and was looked upon as a brother by all of them, as I have said before. Nothing occurred to show his true character, and in November he left the island and the kind people whose hospitality he was to repay so fearfully, and going to Portsmouth he took passage in another fishing schooner, the Addison Gilbert, which was presently wrecked off the coast, and he was again thrown out of employment. Very recklessly he said to Waldemar Ingebertsen, to Charles Jonsen, and even to John Hontvet himself, at different times, that "he must have money if he murdered

for it." He loafed about Portsmouth eight weeks, doing nothing. Meanwhile Karen left our service in February, intending to go to Boston and work at a sewing-machine, for she was not strong and thought she should like it better than housework, but before going she lingered awhile with her sister Maren—fatal delay for her! Maren told me that during this time Karen went to Portsmouth and had her teeth removed, meaning to provide herself with a new set. At the Jonsens', where Louis was staying, one day she spoke to Mrs. Jonsen of her mouth, that it was so sensitive since the teeth had been taken out; and Mrs. Jonsen asked her how long she must wait before the new set could be put in. Karen replied that it would be three months. Louis Wagner was walking up and down at the other end of the room with his arms folded, his favorite attitude. Mrs. Jonsen's daughter passed near him and heard him mutter, "Three months! What is the use! In three months you will be dead!" He did not know the girl was so near, and turning, he confronted her. He knew she must have heard what he said, and he glared at her like a wild man.

On the fifth day of March, 1873, John Hontvet, his brother Mathew, and Ivan Christensen set sail in John's little schooner, the Clara Bella, to draw their trawls. At that time four of the islands were inhabited: one family on White Island, at the lighthouse; the workmen who were building the new hotel on Star Island, and one or two households be-

side; the Hontvet family at Smutty-Nose; and on Appledore, the household at the large house, and on the southern side, opposite Smutty-Nose, a little cottage, where lived J rge Edvardt Ingebertsen, his wife and children, and several men who fished with him. Smutty-Nose is not in sight of the large house at Appledore, so we were in ignorance of all that happened on that dreadful night, longer than the other inhabitants of the Shoals.

John, Ivan and Mathew went to draw their trawls, which had been set some miles to the eastward of the islands. They intended to be back to dinner, and then to go on to Portsmouth with their fish, and bait the trawls afresh, ready to bring back to set again next day. But the wind was strong and fair for Portsmouth and ahead for the islands; it would have been a long beat home against it; so they went on to Portsmouth, without touching at the island to leave one man to guard the women, as had been their custom. This was the first night in all the years Maren had lived there that the house was without a man to protect it. But John, always thoughtful for her, asked Emil Ingebertsen, whom he met on the fishing-grounds, to go over from Appledore and tell her that they had gone on to Portsmouth with the favoring wind, but that they hoped to be back that night. And he would have been back had the bait he expected from Boston arrived on the train in which it was due. How curiously everything adjusted itself to favor the bringing about of this horrible catastrophe! The

bait did not arrive till the half-past twelve train, and they were obliged to work the whole night getting their trawls ready, thus leaving the way perfectly clear for Louis Wagner's awful work.

The three women left alone watched and waited in vain for the schooner to return, and kept the dinner hot for the men, and patiently wondered why they did not come. In vain they searched the wide horizon for that returning sail. Ah me, what pathos is in that longing look of women's eyes for far-off sails! That gaze, so eager, so steadfast, that it would almost seem as if it must conjure up the ghostly shape of glimmering canvas from the mysterious distances of sea and sky, and draw it unerringly home by the mere force of intense wistfulness! And those gentle eyes, that were never to see the light of another sun, looked anxiously across the heaving sea till twilight fell, and then John's messenger, Emil, arrived—Emil Ingebertsen, courteous and gentle as a youthful knight—and reassured them with his explanation, which having given, he departed, leaving them in a much more cheerful state of mind. So the three sisters, with only the little dog Ringe for a protector, sat by the fire chatting together cheerfully. They fully expected the schooner back again that night from Portsmouth, but they were not ill at ease while they waited. Of what should they be afraid? They had not an enemy in the world! No shadow crept to the fireside to warn them what was at hand, no portent of death chilled the air as they talked

their pleasant talk and made their little plans in utter unconsciousness. Karen was to have gone to Portsmouth with the fishermen that day ; she was all ready dressed to go. Various little commissions were given her, errands to do for the two sisters she was to leave behind. Maren wanted some buttons, and " I'll give you one for a pattern ; I'll put it in your purse," she said to Karen, " and then when you open your purse you'll be sure to remember it." (That little button, of a peculiar pattern, was found in Wagner's possession afterward.) They sat up till ten o'clock, talking together. The night was bright and calm ; it was a comfort to miss the bitter winds that had raved about the little dwelling all the long, rough winter. Already it was spring ; this calm was the first token of its coming. It was the 5th of March ; in a few weeks the weather would soften, the grass grow green, and Anethe would see the first flowers in this strange country, so far from her home where she had left father and mother, kith and kin, for love of Ivan. The delicious days of summer at hand would transform the work of the toiling fishermen to pleasure, and all things would bloom and smile about the poor people on the lonely rock ! Alas, it was not to be.

At ten o'clock they went to bed. It was cold and " lonesome" up-stairs, so Maren put some chairs by the side of the lounge, laid a mattress upon it, and made up a bed for Karen in the kitchen, where she presently fell asleep. Maren and Anethe slept

in the next room. So safe they felt themselves, they did not pull down a curtain, nor even try to fasten the house-door. They went to their rest in absolute security and perfect trust. It was the first still night of the new year; a young moon stole softly down toward the west, a gentle wind breathed through the quiet dark, and the waves whispered gently about the island, helping to lull those innocent souls to yet more peaceful slumber. Ah, where were the gales of March that might have plowed that tranquil sea to foam, and cut off the fatal path of Louis Wagner to that happy home! But nature seemed to pause and wait for him. I remember looking abroad over the waves that night and rejoicing over "the first calm night of the year!" It was so still, so bright! The hope of all the light and beauty a few weeks would bring forth stirred me to sudden joy. There should be spring again after the long winter-weariness.

" Can trouble live in April days,
Or sadness in the summer moons?"

I thought, as I watched the clear sky, grown less hard than it had been for weeks, and sparkling with stars. But before another sunset it seemed to me that beauty had fled out of the world, and that goodness, innocence, mercy, gentleness, were a mere mockery of empty words.

Here let us leave the poor women, asleep on the lonely rock, with no help near them in heaven or upon earth, and follow the fishermen to Portsmouth,

where they arrived about four o'clock that afternoon. One of the first men whom they saw as they neared the town was Louis Wagner; to him they threw the rope from the schooner, and he helped draw her in to the wharf. Greetings passed between them; he spoke to Mathew Hontvet, and as he looked at Ivan Christensen, the men noticed a flush pass over Louis's face. He asked were they going out again that night? Three times before they parted he asked that question; he saw that all the three men belonging to the island had come away together; he began to realize his opportunity. They answered him that if their bait came by the train in which they expected it, they hoped to get back that night, but if it was late they should be obliged to stay till morning, baiting their trawls; and they asked him to come and help them. It is a long and tedious business, the baiting of trawls; often more than a thousand hooks are to be manipulated, and lines and hooks coiled, clear of tangles, into tubs, all ready for throwing overboard when the fishing-grounds are reached. Louis gave them a half promise that he would help them, but they did not see him again after leaving the wharf. The three fishermen were hungry, not having touched at their island, where Maren always provided them with a supply of food to take with them; they asked each other if either had brought any money with which to buy bread, and it came out that every one had left his pocket-book at home. Louis, standing by, heard all this. He asked John, then, if he had

made fishing pay. John answered that he had cleared about six hundred dollars.

The men parted, the honest three about their business; but Louis, what became of him with his evil thoughts? At about half-past seven he went into a liquor shop and had a glass of something; not enough to make him unsteady,—he was too wise for that. He was not seen again in Portsmouth by any human creature that night. He must have gone, after that, directly down to the river, that beautiful, broad river, the Piscataqua, upon whose southern bank the quaint old city of Portsmouth dreams its quiet days away; and there he found a boat ready to his hand, a dory belonging to a man by the name of David Burke, who had that day furnished it with new thole-pins. When it was picked up afterward off the mouth of the river, Louis's anxious oars had eaten half-way through the substance of these pins, which are always made of the hardest, toughest wood that can be found. A terrible piece of rowing must that have been, in one night! Twelve miles from the city to the Shoals,—three to the light-houses, where the river meets the open sea, nine more to the islands; nine back again to Newcastle next morning! He took that boat, and with the favoring tide dropped down the rapid river where the swift current is so strong that oars are scarcely needed, except to keep the boat steady. Truly all nature seemed to play into his hands; this first relenting night of earliest spring favored him with its stillness, the tide was fair,

the wind was fair, the little moon gave him just enough light, without betraying him to any curious eyes, as he glided down the three miles between the river banks, in haste to reach the sea. Doubtless the light west wind played about him as delicately as if he had been the most human of God's creatures; nothing breathed remonstrance in his ear, nothing whispered in the whispering water that rippled about his inexorable keel, steering straight for the Shoals through the quiet darkness. The snow lay thick and white upon the land in the moonlight; lamps twinkled here and there from dwellings on either side; in Eliot and Newcastle, in Portsmouth and Kittery, roofs, chimneys, and gables showed faintly in the vague light; the leafless trees clustered dark in hollows or lifted their tracery of bare boughs in higher spaces against the wintry sky. His eyes must have looked on it all, whether he saw the peaceful picture or not. Beneath many a humble roof honest folk were settling into their untroubled rest, as "this planned piece of deliberate wickedness" was stealing silently by with his heart full of darkness, blacker than the black tide that swirled beneath his boat and bore him fiercely on. At the river's mouth stood the sentinel light-houses, sending their great spokes of light afar into the night, like the arms of a wide humanity stretching into the darkness helping hands to bring all who needed succor safely home. He passed them, first the tower at Fort Point, then the taller one at Whale's Back, steadfastly holding

aloft their warning fires. There was no signal from the warning bell as he rowed by, though a danger more subtle, more deadly, than fog, or hurricane, or pelting storm was passing swift beneath it. Unchallenged by anything in earth or heaven, he kept on his way and gained the great outer ocean, doubtless pulling strong and steadily, for he had no time to lose, and the longest night was all too short for an undertaking such as this. Nine miles from the light-houses to the islands! Slowly he makes his way; it seems to take an eternity of time. And now he is midway between the islands and the coast. That little toy of a boat with its one occupant in the midst of the awful, black, heaving sea! The vast dim ocean whispers with a thousand waves; against the boat's side the ripples lightly tap, and pass and are lost; the air is full of fine, mysterious voices of winds and waters. Has he no fear, alone there on the midnight sea with such a purpose in his heart? The moonlight sends a long, golden track across the waves; it touches his dark face and figure, it glitters on his dripping oars. On his right hand Boone Island light shows like a setting star on the horizon, low on his left the two beacons twinkle off Newburyport, at the mouth of the Merrimack River; all the light-houses stand watching along the coast, wheeling their long, slender shafts of radiance as if pointing at this black atom creeping over the face of the planet with such colossal evil in his heart. Before him glitters the Shoals' light at White Island, and helps to guide him to his prey.

Alas, my friendly light-house, that you should serve so terrible a purpose ! Steadily the oars click in the rowlocks ; stroke after stroke of the broad blades draws him away from the lessening line of land, over the wavering floor of the ocean, nearer the lonely rocks. Slowly the coast-lights fade, and now the rote of the sea among the lonely ledges of the Shoals salutes his attentive ear. A little longer and he nears Appledore, the first island, and now he passes by the snow-covered, ice-bound rock, with the long buildings showing clear in the moonlight. He must have looked at them as he went past. I wonder we who slept beneath the roofs that glimmered to his eyes in the uncertain light did not feel, through the thick veil of sleep, what fearful thing passed by ! But we slumbered peacefully as the unhappy woman whose doom every click of those oars in the rowlocks, like the ticking of some dreadful clock, was bringing nearer and nearer. Between the islands he passes ; they are full of chilly gleams and glooms. There is no scene more weird than these snow-covered rocks in winter, more shudderful and strange : the moonlight touching them with mystic glimmer, the black water breaking about them, and the vast shadowy spaces of the sea stretching to the horizon on every side, full of vague sounds, of half lights and shadows, of fear, and of mystery. The island he seeks lies before him, lone and still ; there is no gleam in any window, there is no help near, nothing upon which the women can call for succor. He

does not land in the cove where all boats put in ; he rows round to the south side and draws his boat up on the rocks. His red returning footsteps are found here next day, staining the snow. He makes his way to the house he knows so well.

All is silent : nothing moves, nothing sounds but the hushed voices of the sea. His hand is on the latch, he enters stealthily, there is nothing to resist him. The little dog, Ringe, begins to bark sharp and loud, and Karen rouses, crying, " John, is that you ? " thinking the expected fishermen had returned. Louis seizes a chair and strikes at her in the dark ; the clock on a shelf above her head falls down with the jarring of the blow, and stops at exactly seven minutes to one. Maren, in the next room, waked suddenly from her sound sleep, trying in vain to make out the meaning of it all, cries, " What's the matter ? " Karen answers, " John scared me ! " Maren springs from her bed and tries to open her chamber door ; Louis has fastened it on the other side by pushing a stick through over the latch. With her heart leaping with terror the poor child shakes the door with all her might, in vain. Utterly confounded and bewildered, she hears Karen screaming, " John kills me ! John kills me ! " She hears the sound of repeated blows and shrieks, till at last her sister falls heavily against the door, which gives way, and Maren rushes out. She catches dimly a glimpse of a tall figure outlined against the southern window ; she seizes poor Karen and drags her with the

strength of frenzy within the bedroom. This unknown terror, this fierce, dumb monster who never utters a sound to betray himself through the whole, pursues her with blows, strikes her three times with a chair, either blow with fury sufficient to kill her, had it been light enough for him to see how to direct it; but she gets her sister inside and the door shut, and holds it against him with all her might and Karen's failing strength. What a little heroine was this poor child, struggling with the force of desperation to save herself and her sisters!

All this time Anethe lay dumb, not daring to move or breathe, roused from the deep sleep of youth and health by this nameless, formless terror. Maren, while she strives to hold the door at which Louis rattles again and again, calls to her in anguish, "Anethe, Anethe! Get out of the window! run! hide!" The poor girl, almost paralyzed with fear, tries to obey, puts her bare feet out of the low window, and stands outside in the freezing snow, with one light garment over her cowering figure, shrinking in the cold winter wind, the clear moonlight touching her white face and bright hair and fair young shoulders. "Scream! scream!" shouts frantic Maren. "Somebody at Star Island may hear!" but Anethe answers with the calmness of despair, "I cannot make a sound." Maren screams herself, but the feeble sound avails nothing. "Run! run!" she cries to Anethe; but again Anethe answers, "I cannot move."

Louis has left off trying to force the door; he

listens. Are the women trying to escape? He goes out-of-doors. Maren flies to the window; he comes round the corner of the house and confronts Anethe where she stands in the snow. The moonlight shines full in his face; she shrieks loudly and distinctly, "Louis, Louis!"

Ah, he is discovered, he is recognized! Quick as thought he goes back to the front door, at the side of which stands an ax, left there by Maren, who had used it the day before to cut the ice from the well. He returns to Anethe standing shuddering there. It is no matter that she is beautiful, young, and helpless to resist, that she has been kind to him, that she never did a human creature harm, that she stretches her gentle hands out to him in agonized entreaty, crying piteously, "Oh, Louis, Louis, Louis!" He raises the ax and brings it down on her bright head in one tremendous blow, and she sinks without a sound and lies in a heap, with her warm blood reddening the snow. Then he deals her blow after blow, almost within reach of Maren's hands, as she stands at the window. Distracted, Maren strives to rouse poor Karen, who kneels with her head on the side of the bed; with desperate entreaty she tries to get her up and away, but Karen moans, "I cannot, I cannot." She is too far gone; and then Maren knows she cannot save her, and that she must flee herself or die. So, while Louis again enters the house, she seizes a skirt and wraps round her shoulders, and makes her way out of the open window, over Anethe's murdered body,

barefooted, flying away, anywhere, breathless, shaking with terror.

Where can she go? Her little dog, frightened into silence, follows her,—pressing so close to her feet that she falls over him more than once. Looking back she sees Louis has lit a lamp and is seeking for her. She flies to the cove; if she can but find his boat and row away in it and get help! It is not there; there is no boat in which she can get away. She hears Karen's wild screams,—he is killing her! Oh, where can she go? Is there any place on that little island where he will not find her? She thinks she will creep into one of the empty old houses by the water; but no, she reflects, if I hide there, Ringe will bark and betray me the moment Louis comes to look for me. And Ringe saved her life, for next day Louis's bloody tracks were found all about those old buildings where he had sought her. She flies, with Karen's awful cries in her ears, away over rocks and snow to the farthest limit she can gain. The moon has set; it is about two o'clock in the morning, and oh, so cold! She shivers and shudders from head to feet, but her agony of terror is so great she is hardly conscious of bodily sensation. And welcome is the freezing snow, the jagged ice and iron rocks that tear her unprotected feet, the bitter brine that beats against the shore, the winter winds that make her shrink and tremble;—"they are not so unkind as man's ingratitude!" Falling often, rising, struggling on with feverish haste, she makes her way to the very edge of the water; down

almost into the sea she creeps, between two rocks, upon her hands and knees, and crouches, face downward, with Ringe nestled close beneath her breast, not daring to move through the long hours that must pass before the sun will rise again. She is so near the ocean she can almost reach the water with her hand. Had the wind breathed the least roughly the waves must have washed over her. There let us leave her and go back to Louis Wagner. Maren heard her sister Karen's shrieks as she fled. The poor girl had crept into an unoccupied room in a distant part of the house, striving to hide herself. He could not kill her with blows, blundering in the darkness, so he wound a handkerchief about her throat and strangled her. But now he seeks anxiously for Maren. *Has* she escaped? What terror is in the thought! Escaped, to tell the tale, to accuse him as the murderer of her sisters. Hurriedly, with desperate anxiety, he seeks for her. His time was growing short; it was not in his programme that this brave little creature should give him so much trouble; he had not calculated on resistance from these weak and helpless women. Already it was morning, soon it would be daylight. He could not find her in or near the house; he went down to the empty and dilapidated houses about the cove, and sought her everywhere. What a picture! That blood-stained butcher, with his dark face, crawling about those cellars, peering for that woman! He dared not spend any more time; he must go back for the money he hoped to find, his

reward for this! All about the house he searches, in bureau drawers, in trunks and boxes: he finds fifteen dollars for his night's work! Several hundreds were lying between some sheets folded at the bottom of a drawer in which he looked. But he cannot stop for more thorough investigation; a dreadful haste pursues him like a thousand fiends. He drags Anethe's stiffening body into the house, and leaves it on the kitchen floor. If the thought crosses his mind to set fire to the house and burn up his two victims, he dares not do it: it will make a fatal bonfire to light his homeward way; besides, it is useless, for Maren has escaped to accuse him, and the time presses so horribly!

But how cool a monster is he! After all this hard work he must have refreshment, to support him in the long row back to the land; knife and fork, cup and plate, were found next morning on the table near where Anethe lay; fragments of food which was not cooked in the house, but brought from Portsmouth, were scattered about. Tidy Maren had left neither dishes nor food when they went to bed. The handle of the tea-pot which she had left on the stove was stained and smeared with blood. Can the human mind conceive of such hideous *nonchalance*? Wagner sat down in that room and ate and drank! It is almost beyond belief! Then he went to the well with a basin and towels, tried to wash off the blood, and left towels and basin in the well. He knows he must be gone! It is certain death to linger. He

takes his boat and rows away toward the dark coast and the twinkling lights; it is for dear life, now! What powerful strokes send the small skiff rushing over the water!

There is no longer any moon, the night is far spent; already the east changes, the stars fade; he rows like a madman to reach the land, but a blush of morning is stealing up the sky, and sunrise is rosy over shore and sea, when panting, trembling, weary, a creature accursed, a blot on the face of the day, he lands at Newcastle — too late! Too late! In vain he casts the dory adrift; she will not float away; the flood tide bears her back to give her testimony against him, and afterward she is found at Jaffrey's Point, near the "Devil's Den," and the fact of her worn thole-pins noted. Wet, covered with ice from the spray which has flown from his eager oars, utterly exhausted, he creeps to a knoll and reconnoitres; he thinks he is unobserved, and crawls on towards Portsmouth. But he is seen and recognized by many persons, and his identity established beyond a doubt. He goes to the house of Mathew Jonsen, where he has been living, steals up-stairs, changes his clothes, and appears before the family, anxious, frightened, agitated, telling Jonsen he never felt so badly in his life; that he has got into trouble and is afraid he shall be taken. He cannot eat at breakfast, says "farewell forever," goes away and is shaved, and takes the train to Boston, where he provides himself with new clothes, shoes, a complete outfit, but lingering, held by fate, he

cannot fly, and before night the officer's hand is on his shoulder and he is arrested.

Meanwhile poor shuddering Maren on the lonely island, by the water-side, waits till the sun is high in heaven before she dares to come forth. She thinks he may be still on the island. She said to me, "I thought he must be there, dead or alive. I thought he might go crazy and kill himself after having done all that." At last she steals out. The little dog frisks before her; it is so cold her feet cling to the rocks and snow at every step, till the skin is fairly torn off. Still and frosty is the bright morning, the water lies smiling and sparkling, the hammers of the workmen building the new hotel on Star Island sound through the quiet air. Being on the side of Smutty-Nose opposite Star, she waves her skirt, and screams to attract their attention; they hear her, turn and look, see a woman waving a signal of distress, and, surprising to relate, turn tranquilly to their work again. She realizes at last there is no hope in that direction; she must go round toward Appledore in sight of the dreadful house. Passing it afar off she gives one swift glance toward it, terrified lest in the broad sunshine she may see some horrid token of last night's work; but all is still and peaceful. She notices the curtains the three had left up when they went to bed; they are now drawn down; she knows whose hand has done this, and what it hides from the light of day. Sick at heart, she makes her painful way to the northern edge of Malaga, which is connected with

Smutty-Nose by the old sea-wall. She is directly opposite Appledore and the little cottage where abide her friend and countryman, Jørgе Edvardt Ingebertsen, and his wife and children. Only a quarter of a mile of the still ocean separates her from safety and comfort. She sees the children playing about the door; she calls and calls. Will no one ever hear her? Her torn feet torment her, she is sore with blows and perishing with cold. At last her voice reaches the ears of the children, who run and tell their father that some one is crying and calling; looking across, he sees the poor little figure waving her arms, takes his dory and paddles over, and with amazement recognizes Maren in her night-dress, with bare feet and streaming hair, with a cruel bruise upon her face, with wild eyes, distracted, half senseless with cold and terror. He cries, "Maren, Maren, who has done this? what is it? who is it?" and her only answer is "Louis, Louis, Louis!" as he takes her on board his boat and rows home with her as fast as he can. From her incoherent statement he learns what has happened. Leaving her in the care of his family, he comes over across the hill to the great house on Appledore. As I sit at my desk I see him pass the window, and wonder why the old man comes so fast and anxiously through the heavy snow.

Presently I see him going back again, accompanied by several of his own countrymen and others of our workmen, carrying guns. They are going to Smutty-Nose, and take arms, thinking it possible

Wagner may yet be there. I call down-stairs, "What has happened?" and am answered, "Some trouble at Smutty-Nose; we hardly understand." "Probably a drunken brawl of the reckless fishermen who may have landed there," I say to myself, and go on with my work. In another half-hour I see the men returning, reinforced by others, coming fast, confusedly; and suddenly a wail of anguish comes up from the women below. I cannot believe it when I hear them crying, "Karen is dead! Anethe is dead! Louis Wagner has murdered them both!" I run out into the servants' quarters; there are all the men assembled, an awe-stricken crowd. Old Ingebertsen comes forward and tells me the bare facts, and how Maren lies at his house, half-crazy, suffering with her torn and frozen feet. Then the men are dispatched to search Appledore, to find if by any chance the murderer might be concealed about the place, and I go over to Maren to see if I can do anything for her. I find the women and children with frightened faces at the little cottage; as I go into the room where Maren lies, she catches my hands, crying, "Oh, I so glad to see you! I so glad I save my life!" and with her dry lips she tells me all the story as I have told it here. Poor little creature, holding me with those wild, glittering, dilated eyes, she cannot tell me rapidly enough the whole horrible tale. Upon her cheek is yet the blood-stain from the blow he struck her with a chair, and she shows me two more upon her shoulder, and her torn feet. I go back for

arnica with which to bathe them. What a mockery seems to me the "jocund day" as I emerge into the sunshine, and looking across the space of blue, sparkling water, see the house wherein all that horror lies!

Oh, brightly shines the morning sun and glitters on the white sails of the little vessel that comes dancing back from Portsmouth before the favoring wind, with the two husbands on board! How glad they are for the sweet morning and the fair wind that brings them home again! And Ivan sees in fancy Anethe's face all beautiful with welcoming smiles, and John knows how happy his good and faithful Maren will be to see him back again. Alas, how little they dream what lies before them! From Appledore they are signalled to come ashore, and Ivan and Mathew, landing, hear a confused rumor of trouble from tongues that hardly can frame the words that must tell the dreadful truth. Ivan only understands that something is wrong. His one thought is for Anethe; he flies to Ingebertsen's cottage, she may be there; he rushes in like a maniac, crying, "Anethe, Anethe! Where is Anethe?" and broken-hearted Maren answers her brother, "Anethe is—at home." He does not wait for another word, but seizes the little boat and lands at the same time with John on Smutty-Nose; with headlong haste they reach the house, other men accompanying them; ah, there are blood-stains all about the snow! Ivan is the first to burst open the door and enter. What words can tell it! There

upon the floor, naked, stiff and stark, is the woman he idolizes, for whose dear feet he could not make life's ways smooth and pleasant enough—stone dead! Dead—horribly butchered! her bright hair stiff with blood, the fair head that had so often rested on his breast crushed, cloven, mangled with the brutal ax! Their eyes are blasted by the intolerable sight: both John and Ivan stagger out and fall, senseless, in the snow. Poor Ivan! his wife a thousand times adored, the dear girl he had brought from Norway, the good, sweet girl who loved him so, whom he could not cherish tenderly enough! And he was not there to protect her! There was no one there to save her!

“Did heaven look on
And would not take their part!”

Poor fellow, what had he done that fate should deal him such a blow as this! Dumb, blind with anguish, he made no sign.

“What says the body when they spring
Some monstrous torture-engine's whole
Strength on it? No more says the soul.”

Some of his pitying comrades lead him away, like one stupefied, and take him back to Appledore. John knows his wife is safe. Though stricken with horror and consumed with wrath, he is not paralyzed like poor Ivan, who has been smitten with worse than death. They find Karen's body in another part of the house, covered with blows and black in the face, strangled. They find Louis's tracks,—all

the tokens of his disastrous presence,—the contents of trunks and drawers scattered about in his hasty search for the money, and all within the house and without, blood, blood, everywhere.

When I reach the cottage with the arnica for Maren, they have returned to Smutty-Nose. John, her husband, is there. He is a young man of the true Norse type, blue-eyed, fair-haired, tall and well made, with handsome teeth and bronzed beard. Perhaps he is a little quiet and undemonstrative generally, but at this moment he is superb, kindled from head to feet, a firebrand of woe and wrath, with eyes that flash and cheeks that burn. I speak a few words to him,—what words can meet such an occasion as this!—and having given directions about the use of the arnica, for Maren, I go away, for nothing more can be done for her, and every comfort she needs is hers. The outer room is full of men; they make way for me, and as I pass through I catch a glimpse of Ivan crouched with his arms thrown round his knees and his head bowed down between them, motionless, his attitude expressing such abandonment of despair as cannot be described. His whole person seems to shrink, as if deprecating the blow that has fallen upon him.

All day the slaughtered women lie as they were found, for nothing can be touched till the officers of the law have seen the whole. And John goes back to Portsmouth to tell his tale to the proper authorities. What a different voyage from the one he had just taken, when happy and careless he was return-

ing to the home he had left so full of peace and comfort ! What a load he bears back with him, as he makes his tedious way across the miles that separate him from the means of vengeance he burns to reach ! But at last he arrives, tells his story, the police at other cities are at once telegraphed, and the city marshal follows Wagner to Boston. At eight o'clock that evening comes the steamer *Mayflower* to the Shoals, with all the officers on board. They land and make investigations at Smutty-Nose, then come here to Appledore and examine Maren, and, when everything is done, steam back to Portsmouth, which they reach at three o'clock in the morning. After all are gone and his awful day's work is finished at last, poor John comes back to Maren, and kneeling by the side of her bed, he is utterly overpowered with what he has passed through ; he is shaken with sobs as he cries, " Oh, Maren, Maren, it is too much, too much ! I cannot bear it ! " And Maren throws her arms about his neck, crying, " Oh, John, John, don't ! I shall be crazy, I shall die, if you go on like that. " Poor innocent, unhappy people, who never wronged a fellow-creature in their lives !

But Ivan—what is their anguish to his ? They dare not leave him alone lest he do himself an injury. He is perfectly mute and listless ; he cannot weep, he can neither eat nor sleep. He sits like one in a horrid dream. " Oh, my poor, poor brother ! " Maren cries in tones of deepest grief, when I speak his name to her next day. She herself cannot rest

a moment till she hears that Louis is taken; at every sound her crazed imagination fancies he is coming back for her; she is fairly beside herself with terror and anxiety; but the night following that of the catastrophe brings us news that he is arrested, and there is stern rejoicing at the Shoals; but no vengeance on him can bring back those unoffending lives, or restore that gentle home. The dead are properly cared for; the blood is washed from Anethe's beautiful bright hair; she is clothed in her wedding-dress, the blue dress in which she was married, poor child, that happy Christmas time in Norway, a little more than a year ago. They are carried across the sea to Portsmouth, the burial service is read over them, and they are hidden in the earth. After poor Ivan has seen the faces of his wife and sister still and pale in their coffins, their ghastly wounds concealed as much as possible, flowers upon them and the priest praying over them, his trance of misery is broken, the grasp of despair is loosened a little about his heart. Yet hardly does he notice whether the sun shines or no, or care whether he lives or dies. Slowly his senses steady themselves from the effects of a shock that nearly destroyed him, and merciful time, with imperceptible touch, softens day by day the outlines of that picture, at the memory of which he will never cease to shudder while he lives.

Louis Wagner was captured in Boston on the evening of the next day after his atrocious deed, and Friday morning, followed by a hooting mob,

he was taken to the Eastern depot. At every station along the route crowds were assembled, and there were fierce cries for vengeance. At the depot in Portsmouth a dense crowd of thousands of both sexes had gathered, who assailed him with yells and curses and cries of "Tear him to pieces!" It was with difficulty he was at last safely imprisoned. Poor Maren was taken to Portsmouth from Apple-dore on that day. The story of Wagner's day in Boston, like every other detail of the affair, has been told by every newspaper in the country : his agitation and restlessness, noted by all who saw him ; his curious, reckless talk. To one he says, "I have just killed two sailors ;" to another, Jacob Toldtman, into whose shop he goes to buy shoes, "I have seen a woman lie as still as that boot," and so on. When he is caught he puts on a bold face and determines to brave it out ; denies everything with tears and virtuous indignation. The men whom he has so fearfully wronged are confronted with him ; his attitude is one of injured innocence ; he surveys them more in sorrow than in anger, while John is on fire with wrath and indignation, and hurls maledictions at him ; but Ivan, poor Ivan, hurt beyond all hope or help, is utterly mute ; he does not utter one word. Of what use is it to curse the murderer of his wife ? It will not bring her back ; he has no heart for cursing, he is too completely broken. Maren told me the first time she was brought into Louis's presence, her heart leaped so fast she could hardly breathe. She entered the room softly with

her husband and Mathew Jonsen's daughter. Louis was whittling a stick. He looked up and saw her face, and the color ebbed out of his, and rushed back and stood in one burning spot in his cheek, as he looked at her and she looked at him for a space, in silence. Then he drew about his evil mind the detestable garment of sanctimoniousness, and in sentimental accents he murmured, "I'm glad Jesus loves me!" "The devil loves you!" cried John, with uncompromising veracity. "I know it wasn't nice," said decorous Maren, "but John couldn't help it; it was too much to bear!"

The next Saturday afternoon, when he was to be taken to Saco, hundreds of fishermen came to Portsmouth from all parts of the coast, determined on his destruction, and there was a fearful scene in the quiet streets of that peaceful city when he was being escorted to the train by the police and various officers of justice. Two thousand people had assembled, and such a furious, yelling crowd was never seen or heard in Portsmouth. The air was rent with cries for vengeance; showers of bricks and stones were thrown from all directions, and wounded several of the officers who surrounded Wagner. His knees trembled under him, he shook like an aspen, and the officers found it necessary to drag him along, telling him he must keep up if he would save his life. Except that they feared to injure the innocent as well as the guilty, those men would have literally torn him to pieces. But at last he was put on board the cars in safety, and

carried away to prison. His demeanor throughout the term of his confinement, and during his trial and subsequent imprisonment, was a wonderful piece of acting. He really inspired people with doubt as to his guilt. I make an extract from the Portsmouth Chronicle, dated March 13th, 1873: "Wagner still retains his amazing *sang froid*, which is wonderful, even in a strong-nerved German. The sympathy of most of the visitors at his jail has certainly been won by his calmness and his general appearance, which is quite prepossessing." This little instance of his method of proceeding I must subjoin: A lady who had come to converse with him on the subject of his eternal salvation said, as she left him, "I hope you put your trust in the Lord," to which he sweetly answered, "I always did, ma'am, and I always shall."

A few weeks after all this had happened, I sat by the window one afternoon, and, looking up from my work, I saw some one passing slowly,—a young man who seemed so thin, so pale, so bent and ill, that I said, "Here is some stranger who is so very sick, he is probably come to try the effect of the air, even thus early." It was Ivan Christensen. I did not recognize him. He dragged one foot after the other wearily, and walked with the feeble motion of an old man. He entered the house; his errand was to ask for work. He could not bear to go away from the neighborhood of the place where Anethe had lived and where they had been so happy, and he could not bear to work at fishing on the

south side of the island, within sight of that house. There was work enough for him here ; a kind voice told him so, a kind hand was laid on his shoulder, and he was bidden come and welcome. The tears rushed into the poor fellow's eyes, he went hastily away, and that night sent over his chest of tools,—he was a carpenter by trade. Next day he took up his abode here and worked all summer. Every day I carefully observed him as I passed him by, regarding him with an inexpressible pity, of which he was perfectly unconscious, as he seemed to be of everything and everybody. He never raised his head when he answered my “Good-morning,” or “Good-evening, Ivan.” Though I often wished to speak, I never said more to him, for he seemed to me to be hurt too sorely to be touched by human hand. With his head sunk on his breast, and wearily dragging his limbs, he pushed the plane or drove the saw to and fro with a kind of dogged persistence, looking neither to the left nor right. Well might the weight of woe he carried bow him to the earth ! By and by he spoke, himself, to other members of the household, saying, with a patient sorrow, he believed it was to have been, it had so been ordered, else why did all things so play into Louis's hands ? All things were furnished him : the knowledge of the unprotected state of the women, a perfectly clear field in which to carry out his plans, just the right boat he wanted in which to make his voyage, fair tide, fair wind, calm sea, just moonlight enough ; even the ax with which to kill Anethe

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stood ready to his hand at the house door. Alas, it was to have been ! Last summer Ivan went back again to Norway—alone. Hardly is it probable that he will ever return to a land whose welcome to him fate made so horrible. His sister Maren and her husband still live blameless lives, with the little dog Ringe, in a new home they have made for themselves in Portsmouth, not far from the river-side ; the merciful lapse of days and years takes them gently but surely away from the thought of that season of anguish ; and though they can never forget it all, they have grown resigned and quiet again. And on the island other Norwegians have settled, voices of charming children sound sweetly in the solitude that echoed so awfully to the shrieks of Karen and Maren. But to the weirdness of the winter midnight something is added, a vision of two dim, reproachful shades who watch while an agonized ghost prowls eternally about the dilapidated houses at the beach's edge, close by the black, whispering water, seeking for the woman who has escaped him—escaped to bring upon him the death he deserves, whom he never, never, never can find, though his distracted spirit may search till man shall vanish from off the face of the earth, and time shall be no more.

VENETIAN GLASS.

BY BRANDER MATTHEWS.

I.

IN THE OLD WORLD.

THEY had been to the Lido for a short swim in the slight but bracing surf of the Adriatic. They had had a midday breakfast in a queer little restaurant, known only to the initiated and therefore early discovered by Larry, who had a keen scent for a cook learned in the law. They had loitered along the Riva degli Schiavoni, looking at a perambulatory puppet-show, before which a delighted audience sturdily disregarded the sharp wind which bravely fluttered the picturesque tatters of the spectators ; and they were moved to congratulate the Venetians on their freedom from the monotonous repertory of the Anglo-American Punch-and-Judy, which consists solely of a play really unique in the exact sense of that much-

abused word. They were getting their fill of the delicious Italian art which is best described by an American verb—to loaf. And yet they were not wont to be idle, and they had both the sharp, quick American manner, on which laziness sits uneasily and infrequently.

John Manning and Laurence Laughton were both young New Yorkers. Larry—for so in youth was he called by everybody pending the arrival of years which should make him a universal uncle, to be known of all men as “Uncle Larry”—was as pleasant a travelling companion as one could wish. He was the only son and heir of a father, now no more, but vaguely understood when alive and in the flesh to have been “in the China trade”—although whether this meant crockery or Cathay no one was able with precision to declare. Larry Laughton had been graduated from Columbia College with the class of 1860, and the following spring found him here in Venice after a six months’ ramble through Europe with his old friend, John Manning, partly on foot and partly in an old carriage of their own, in which they enjoyed the fast-vanishing pleasures of posting.

John Manning was a little older than Larry; he had left West Point in 1854 with a commission as second lieutenant in the —first Cavalry. For nearly six years he did his duty in that state of life in which it pleased the Secretary of War and General Scott to call him; he had crossed the plains one bleak winter to a post in the Rocky

Mountains, and he had danced through two summers at Fort Adams at Newport ; he had been stationed for a while in New Mexico, where there was an abundance of the pleasant sport of Indian-fighting—even now he had only to make believe a little to see the tufted head of a Navajo peer around the columns supporting the Lion of Saint Mark, or to mistake the fringe of *facchini* on the edge of the Grand Canal for a group of the shiftless half-breeds of New Mexico. In time the——first Cavalry had been ordered North, where the work was then less pleasant than on the border ; and, in fact, it was a distinct unwillingness to execute the Fugitive Slave Law which forced John Manning to resign his commission in the army, although it was the hanging of John Brown which drew from him the actual letter of resignation. Before settling down to other work, for he was a man who could not and would not be idle, he had gratified his long desire of taking a turn through the Old World. Larry Laughton had joined him in Holland, where he had been making researches into the family history, and proving to his own satisfaction at least that the New York Mannings, in spite of their English name, had come from Amsterdam to New Amsterdam. And now, toward the end of April, 1861, John Manning and Laurence Laughton stood on the Rialto, hesitating *Fra Marco e Todaro*, as the Venetians have it, in uninterested question whether they should go into the Ghetto, among the hideous homes of the chosen

people, or out again to Murano for a second visit to the famous factory of Venetian glass.

"I say, John," remarked Larry as they lazily debated the question, gazing meanwhile on the steady succession of gondolas coming and going to and from the steps by the side of the bridge, "I'd as lief if not liefer go to Murano again, if they've any of their patent anti-poison goblets left. You know they say they used to make a glass so fine that it was shattered into shivers whenever poison might be poured into it. Of course I don't believe it, but a glass like that would be mighty handy in the sample-rooms of New York. I'm afraid a man walking up Broadway could use up a gross of the anti-poison goblets before he got one straight drink of the genuine article, unadulterated and drawn from the wood."

"You must not make fun of a poetic legend, Larry. You have to believe everything over here or you do not get the worth of your money," said John Manning.

"Well, I don't know," was Larry's reply; "I don't know just what to believe. I was talking about it last night at Florian's, while you were writing letters home."

"I did not know Mr. Laughton had friends in Venice."

"Oh, I can make friends anywhere. And this one was lots of fun. He was a priest, an *abbate*, I think he calls himself. He had read five newspapers in the *caffè* and paid for one tiny cup of

coffee. When I finished the *Débats* I passed it to him for his sixth—and he spoke to me in French, and I wasn't going to let an Italian talk French to me without answering back, so I just sailed in and began to swap stories with him."

"No doubt you gave him much valuable information."

"Well, I did ; I just exuded information. Why, the first thing he said, when I told him I was an American, was to wonder whether I hadn't met his brother, who was also in America—in Rio Janeiro—just as if Rio was the other side of the North River !"

John Manning smiled at Larry's disgusted expression, and asked, "What has this *abbate* to do with the fragile Venetian glass?"

"Only this," answered Larry. "I told him two or three North-westerns, just as well as I could in French, and then he said that marvellous things were also done here once upon a time. And he told me about the glass which broke when poison was poured into it."

"It is a pleasant superstition," said John Manning. "I think Poe makes use of it, and I believe Shakespeare refers to it."

"But did either Poe or Shakespeare say anything about the two goblets just alike made for the twin brothers Manin nearly four hundred years ago? Did they tell you how one glass was shattered by poison and its owner killed, and how the other brother had to flee for his life? Did they inform

you that the unbroken goblet exists to this day, and is in fact now for sale by an Hebrew Jew who peddles antiquities? Did they tell you that?"

"Neither Edgar Allan Poe nor William Shakespeare ever disturbs my slumbers by telling me anything of the sort," laughed Manning.

"Well, my *abbate* told me just that, and he gave me the address of the Shylock who has the surviving goblet for sale."

"Suppose we go there and see it," suggested Manning, "and you can tell me the whole story of the twin brothers as we go along."

"Shall we take a gondola or walk?" was Larry's interrogative acceptance of the suggestion.

"It's in the Ghetto, isn't it?"

"Most of the Jew curiosity dealers have left the Ghetto. Our Shylock has a palace on the Grand Canal. I guess we had better take a gondola, though it can't be far."

So they sat themselves down in one of the aquatic cabs which ply the water streets of the city in the sea. The gondolier stood to his oar and put his best foot foremost, and as the boat sped forward on its way along the capital S of the Grand Canal, Larry told the tale of the twin brothers and the shattered goblet.

"Well, it seems that some time in the sixteenth century, say three hundred years ago or thereabout, there were several branches of the great and powerful Manin family—the same family to which the patriotic Daniele Manin belonged, you

know. And at the head of one of these branches were the twin brothers Marco Manin and Giovanni Manin. Now, these brothers were devoted to each other, and they had only one thought, one word, one deed. When one of them happened to think of a thing, it often happened that the other brother did it. So it was not surprising that they both fell in love with the same woman. She was a dangerous-looking, yellow-haired woman, with steel-gray eyes—that is, if her eyes were not really green, as to which there was doubt. But there was no doubt at all that she was powerfully handsome. The *abbate* said that there was a famous portrait of her in one of these churches as a Saint Mary Magdalen with her hair down. She was a splendid creature, and lots of men were running after her besides the twin Manins. The two brothers did not quarrel with each other about the woman, but they did quarrel with some of her other lovers, and particularly with a nobleman of the highest rank and power, who was supposed to belong not only to the Council of Ten but to the Three. Between this man and the Manins there was war to the knife and the knife to the hilt. One day Marco Manin expressed a wish for one of these goblets of Venetian glass so fine that poison shatters it, and so Giovanni went out to Murano and ordered two of them, of the very finest quality, and just alike in every particular of color and shape and size. You see the twins always had everything in pairs. But the people at Murano somehow misunderstood

the order, and although they made both glasses they sent home only one. Marco Manin was at table when it arrived, and he took it in his hand at once, and after admiring its exquisite workmanship—you see, all these old Venetians had the art-feeling strongly developed—he told a servant to fill it to the brim with Cyprus wine. But as he raised the flowing cup to his lips it shivered in his grasp and the wine was spilt on the marble floor. He drew his sword and slew the servant who had sought to betray him, and rushing into the street he found himself face to face with the enemy whom he knew to have instigated the attempt. They crossed swords at once, but before Marco Manin could have a fair fight for his life he was stabbed in the back by a glass stiletto, the hilt of which was broken off short in the wound."

"Where was his brother all this time?" was the first question with which John Manning broke the thread of his friend's story.

"He had been to see the yellow-haired beauty, and he came back just in time to meet his brother's lifeless body as it was carried into their desolate home. Holding his dead brother's hand as he had often held it living, he promised his brother to avenge his death without delay and at any cost. Then he prepared at once for flight. He knew that Venice would be too hot to hold him when the deed was done; and besides, he felt that without his brother life in Venice would be intolerable. So he made ready for flight. Twenty-four hours to a

minute after Marco Manin's death the body of the hireling assassin was sinking to the bottom of the Grand Canal, while the man who had paid for the murder lay dead on the same spot with the point of a glass stiletto in his heart! And when they wanted to send him the other goblet, there was no one to send it to: Giovanni Manin had disappeared."

"Where had he gone?" queried John Manning.

"That's what I asked the *abbate*, and he said he didn't know for sure, but that in those days Venice had a sizable trade with the Low Countries, and there was a tradition that Giovanni Manin had gone to the Netherlands."

"To Holland?" asked John Manning with unwonted interest.

"Yes, to Amsterdam or to Rotterdam or to some one of those -dam towns, as we used to call them in our geography class."

"It was to Amsterdam," said Manning, speaking as one who had certain information.

"How do you know that?" asked Larry. "Even the *abbate* said it was only a tradition that he had gone to Holland at all."

"He went to Amsterdam," said Manning; "that I know."

Before Larry could ask how it was that his friend knew anything about the place of exile of a man whom he had never heard of ten minutes earlier, the gondola had paused before the door of the palace in which dwelt the dealer in antiquities who

had in his possession the famous goblet of Venetian glass. As they ascended to the sequence of rambling rooms cluttered with old furniture, rusty armor, and odds and ends of statuary, in the which the modern Jew of Venice sat at the receipt of custom, both Larry Laughton and John Manning had to give their undivided attention to the framing in Italian of their wishes. Shylock himself was a venerable and benevolent person, with a look of wonderful shrewdness and an incomprehensibility of speech, for he spoke the Venetian dialect with a harsh Jewish accent, either of which would have daunted a linguistic veteran. Plainly enough, conversation was impossible, for he could barely understand their American-Italian, and they could not at all understand his Jewish-Venetian. But it would not do to let these *Inglesi* go away without paying tribute.

"Ciò!" said Shylock, smiling graciously at his futile attempts to open communication with the enemy. Then he called Jessica from the deep window where she had been at work on the quaint old account-books of the shop, as great curiosities as anything in it, since they were kept in Venetian, but by means of the Hebrew alphabet. She spoke Italian, and to her the young men made known their wants. She said a few words to her father, and he brought forth the goblet.

It was a marvellous specimen of the most exquisite Venetian workmanship. A pair of green serpents with eyes that glowed like fire writhed around the

golden stem of a blood-red bowl, and as the white light of the cloudless sky fell on it from the broad window, it burned in the glory of the sunshine and seemed to fill itself full of some mysterious and royal wine. Shylock revolved it slowly in his hand to show the strange waviness of its texture, and as it turned, the serpents clung more closely to the stem and arched their heads and shot a glance of hate at the strangers who came to gaze on them with curious fascination.

John Manning looked at the goblet long and eagerly. "How did it come into your possession?" he asked.

And Jessica translated Shylock's declaration that the goblet had been at Murano for hundreds of years; it was *antico—antichissimo*, as the signor could see for himself. It was of the best period of the art. That Shylock would guarantee. How came it into his possession? By the greatest good fortune. It was taken from Murano during the troubles after the fall of the Republic in the time of Napoleon. It had gone finally into the hands of a certain count, who, very luckily, was poor. *Conte che non conta, non conta niente*. So Shylock had been enabled to buy it. It had been the desire of his heart for years to own so fine an object.

"How much do you want for it?" asked John Manning.

Shylock scented from afar the battle of bargaining, dear in Italy to both buyer and seller. He gave a keen look at both the *Inglesi*, and took up

the glass affectionately, as though he could not bear to part with it. Jessica interpreted. Shylock had intended that goblet for his own private collection, but the frank and generous manner of their excellencies had overcome him, and he would let them have it for five hundred florins.

"Five hundred florins ! Phew !" whistled Larry, astonished in spite of his initiation into the mysteries of Italian bargaining. "Well, if you were to ask me the Shakespearian conundrum, Hath not a Jew eyes ? I shouldn't give it up ; I should say he has eyes—for the main chance."

"Five hundred florins," said John Manning. "Very well. I'll take it."

Shylock's astonishment at getting four times what he would have taken was equalled only by his regret that he had not asked twice as much.

"Can you pack it so that I can take it to New York safely ?"

"*Sicuro*, signor," and Shylock agreed to have the precious object boxed with all possible care and despatch, and delivered at the hotel that afternoon.

"*Servo suo* !" said Jessica, as they stood at the door.

"Bon di, Patron !" responded Larry in Venetian fashion ; then as the door closed behind them he said to John Manning, "Seems to me you were in a hurry ! You could have had that glass for half the money."

"Perhaps I could," was Manning's quiet reply, "but I was eager to get it back at once."

"Get it back? Why, it wasn't stolen from *you*, was it? I never did suppose *he* came by it honestly."

"It was not stolen from me personally. But it belonged to my family. It was made for Giovanni Manin, who fled from Venice to Amsterdam three hundred odd years ago. His grandson and namesake left Amsterdam for New Amsterdam half a century later. And when the English changed New Amsterdam into New York, Jan Mannin became John Manning—and I am his direct descendant, and the first of my blood to return to Venice to get the goblet Giovanni Manin ordered and left behind."

"Well, I'm damned!" said Larry, pensively.

"And now," continued John Manning as they took their seats in the gondola, "tell the man to go to the church where the picture of Mary Magdalen is. I want a good look at that woman!"

In the evening, as John Manning sat in a little *caffè* under the arcades of the Piazza San Marco, sipping a tiny cup of black coffee, Larry entered with a rush of righteous indignation.

"What's the matter, Larry?" was John Manning's calm query.

"There's the devil to pay at home. South Carolina has fired on the flag at Sumter."

Three weeks later Colonel Manning was assigned to duty in the Army of the Potomac.

II.

IN THE NEW WORLD.

IN the month of February, 1864, a chance newspaper paragraph informed whom it might concern that Major Laurence Laughton, having three weeks' leave of absence from his regiment, was at the Astor House. In consequence of this advertisement of his whereabouts, Major Laughton received many cheerful circulars and letters, in most of which his attention was claimed for the artificial limb made by the advertiser. He also received a letter from Colonel John Manning urgently bidding him to come out for a day at least to his little place on the Hudson, where he was lying sick, and, as he feared, sick unto death. On the receipt of this Larry cut short a promising flirtation with a war-widow who sat next him at table and took the first train up the river. It was a bleak day, and there was at least a foot of snow on the ground, as hard and as dry as though it had clean forgot that it was made of water. As Larry left the little station, to which the train had slowly struggled at last, an hour behind time, the wind sprang up again and began to moan around his feet and to sting his face with icy shot; and as he trudged across the desolate path which led to Manning's

lonely house he discovered that Rude Boreas could be as keen a sharpshooter as any in the rifle-pits around Richmond. A hard walk up-hill for a quarter of an hour brought him to the brow of the cliff on which stood the forlorn and wind-swept house where John Manning lay. An unkempt and hideous old crone as black as night opened the door for him. He left in the hall his hat and overcoat and a little square box he had brought in his hand ; and then he followed the ebony hag up-stairs to Colonel Manning's room. Here at the door she left him, after giving a sharp knock. A weak voice said, " Come in ! "

Laurence Laughton entered the room with a quick step, but the light-hearted words with which he had meant to encourage his friend died on his lips as soon as he saw how grievously that friend had changed. John Manning had faded to a shadow of his former self ; the light of his eye was quenched, and the spirit within him seemed broken ; the fine, sensitive, noble face lay white against the pillow, looking weary and wan and hopeless. The effort to greet his friend exhausted him and brought on a hard cough, and he pressed his hand to his breast as though some hidden malady were gnawing and burning within.

" Well, John," said Larry, as he took a seat by the bedside, " why didn't you let me know before now that you were laid up ? I could have got away a month ago."

" Time enough yet," said John Manning slowly ;

"time enough yet. I shall not die for another week, I fear."

"Why, man, you must not talk like that. You are as good as a dozen dead men yet," said Larry, trying to look as cheerful as might be.

"I am as good as dead myself," said the sick man seriously, as befitted a man under the shadow of death; "and I have no wish to live. The sonner I am out of this pain and powerlessness the better I shall like it."

"I say, John, old man, this is no way for you to talk. Brace up, and you will soon be another man!"

"I shall soon be in another world, I hope," and the helpless misery of the tone in which these few words were said smote Laurence Laughton to the heart.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked with as lively an air as he could attain, for the ominous and inexplicable sadness of the situation was fast taking hold on him.

"I have a bullet through the lungs and a pain in the heart."

"But men do not die of a bullet in the lungs and a pain in the heart," was Larry's encouraging response.

"I shall."

"Why should you more than others?"

"Because there is something else—something mysterious, some unknown malady—which bears me down and burns me up. There is no use try-

ing to deceive me, Larry. My papers are made out, and I shall get my discharge from the Army of the Living in a very few days now. But I must not waste the little breath I have left in talking about myself. I sent for you to ask a favor."

Larry held out his hand, and John Manning took it and seemed to gain strength from the firm clasp.

"I knew I could rely on you," he said, "for much or for little. And this is not much, for I have not much to leave. This worn old house, which belonged to my grandmother, and in which I spent the happiest hours of my boyhood, this and a few shares of stock here and there, are all I have to leave. I do not know what the house is worth—and I shall be glad when I am gone from it. If I had not come here, I think I might perhaps have got well. There seems to be something deadly about the place." The sick man's voice sank to a wavering whisper, as though borne down by a sudden weight of impending danger against which he might struggle in vain; he gave a fearful glance about the room as though seeking a mystic foe, hidden and unknown. "The very first day we were here the cat lapped its milk by the fire and then stretched itself out and died without a sign. And I had not been here two days before I felt the fatal influence: the trouble from my wound came on again, and this awful burning in my breast began to torture me. As a boy, I thought that heaven must be like this house; and now I should not want to die if I thought hell could be worse!"

"Why don't you leave the place, since you hate it so?" asked Larry, with what scant cheeriness he could muster; he was yielding himself slowly to the place, though he fought bravely against his superstitious weakness.

"Am I fit to be moved?" was the sick man's query in reply.

"But you will be better soon, and then—"

"I shall be worse before I am better, and I shall never be better in this life or in this place. No, no, I must die in my hole like a dog. Like a dog!" and John Manning repeated the words with a wistful face. "Do you remember the faithful beast who always welcomed me here when we came up before we went to Europe?"

"Of course I do," said Larry, glad to get the sick man away from his sickness, and to ease his mind by talk on a healthy topic; "he was a splendid fellow, too. Cesar, that was his name, wasn't it?"

"Cesar Borgia I called him," was Manning's sad reply. "I knew you could not have forgotten him. He is dead. Cesar Borgia is dead. He was the last living thing that loved me—except you, Larry, I know—and he is dead. He died this morning. He came to my bedside as usual, and he licked my hand gently and looked up in my face and laid him down alongside of me on the carpet here and died. Poor Cesar Borgia—he loved me, and he is dead! And you, Larry, you must not stay here. The air is fatal. Every

breath may be your last. When you have heard what I want, you must be off at once. If you like, you may come up again to the funeral before your leave is up. I saw you had three weeks."

Laurence Laughton moved uneasily in his chair and swallowed with difficulty. "John," he managed to say after an effort, "if you talk to me like that, I shall go at once. Tell me what it is you want me to do for you."

"I want you to take care of my wife and of my child, if there be one born to me after my death."

"Your wife?" repeated Larry, in staring surprise.

"You did not know I was married? I knew it at the time, as the boy said," and John Manning smiled bitterly.

"Where is she?" was Larry's second query.

"Here."

"Here?"

"In this house. You shall see her before you go. And after the funeral I want you to get her away from here with what speed you can. Sell this house for what it will bring, and put the money into government bonds. You may find it hard to persuade her to move, for she seems to have a strange liking for this place. She breathes freely in the deadly air that suffocates me. But you must not let her remain here; this is no place for her now that a new life and new duties are before her."

"How was it I did not know of your marriage?" asked Larry.

“I knew nothing about it myself twenty-four hours before it happened,” answered John Manning. “You need not look surprised. It is a simple story. I had this shot through the breast at Gettysburg last Fourth of July. I lay on the hillside a day and a night before relief came. Then a farmer took me into his house. A military surgeon dressed my wounds, but I owed my life to the nursing and care and unceasing attention of a young lady who was staying with the farmer’s daughter. She had been doing her duty as a nurse as near to the field as she could go ever since the first Bull Run. She saved my life, and I gave it to her—what there was of it. She was a beautiful woman, indeed I never saw a more beautiful—and she has a strange likeness to—but that you shall see for yourself when you see her. She is getting a little rest now, for she has been up all night attending to me. She *will* wait on me in spite of all I say ; of course I know there is no use wasting effort on me now. She is the most devoted nurse in the world ; and we shall part as we met—she taking care of me at the last as she did at the first. Would God our relation had never been other than patient and nurse ! It would have been better for both had we never been husband and wife !” And John Manning turned his face to the wall with a weary sigh ; then he coughed harshly and raised his hand to his breast as though to stifle the burning within him.

“It seems to me, John, that you ought not to

talk like that of the woman you loved," said Laurence Laughton, with unusual seriousness.

"I never loved her," answered Manning, coldly. Then he turned and asked hastily, "Do you think I should want to die, if I loved her?"

"But she loves you," said Laurence.

"She never loved me!" was Manning's impatient retort.

"Then why were you married?"

"That's what I would like to know. It was fate, I suppose. What is to be, is. I never used to believe in predestination, but I know that of my own free will I could never have done what I did."

"I confess I do not understand you," said Larry.

"I do not understand myself. There is so much in this world that is mysterious—I hope the next will be different. I was under the charm, I fancy, when I married her. She is a beautiful woman, as I told you, and I was a man, and I was weak, and I had hope. Why she married me that early September evening, I do not know. It was not long before we both found out our mistake. And it was too late then. We were man and wife. Don't suppose I blame her—I do not. I have no cause of complaint. She is a good wife to me, as I have tried to be a good husband to her. We made a mistake in marrying each other, and we know it—that's all!"

Before Laurence Laughton could answer, the

door opened gently and Mrs. Manning entered the room. Laurence rose to greet his friend's wife, but the act was none the less a homage to her resplendent beauty. In spite of the worn look of her face, she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. She had tawny tigress hair and hungry tigress eyes. The eyes indeed were fathomless and indescribable, and their fitful glance had something uncanny about it. The hair was nearly of the true Venetian color, and she had the true Venetian sumptuousness of appearance, simple as was her attire. She seemed as though she had just risen from the couch whereon she reclined before Titian or Tintoretto, and, having clothed herself, had walked forth in this nineteenth century and these United States. She was a strange and striking figure, and Laurence found it impossible to analyze exactly the curious and weird impression she produced on him. Her voice, as she greeted him, gave him a peculiar thrill; and when he shook hands with her he seemed to feel himself face to face with some strange being from another land and another century. She inspired him with a supernatural awe he was not wont to feel in the presence of woman. He had a dim consciousness that there lingered in his memory the glimmering image of some woman seen somewhere, he knew not when, who was like unto the woman before him.

As she took her seat by the side of the bed, she gave Laurence Laughton a look that seemed to peer

into his soul. Laurence felt himself quiver under it. It was a look to make a man fearful. Then John Manning, who had moved uneasily as his wife entered, said, "Laurence, can you see any resemblance in my wife to any one you ever saw before?"

Their eyes met again, and again Laurence had a vague remembrance as though he and she had stood face to face before in some earlier existence. Then his wandering recollections took shape, and he remembered the face and the form and the haunting mystery of the expression, and he felt for a moment as though he had been permitted to peer into the cabalistic darkness of an awful mystery, though he failed wholly to perceive its occult significance—if significance there were of any sort.

"I think I do remember," he said at last. "It was in Venice—at the church of Santa Maria Madalena—the picture there that—"

"You remember aright!" interrupted John Manning. "My wife is the living image of the Venetian woman for whose beauty Marco Manin was one day stabbed in the back with a glass stiletto and Giovanni Manin fled from the place of his birth and never saw it again. It is idle to fight against the stars in their courses. We met here in the New World, she and I, as they met in the Old World so long ago—and the end is the same. It was to be . . . it was to be!"

Laurence Laughton gave a swift glance at his friend's wife to see what effect these words might

have on her, and he was startled to detect on her face the same enigmatic smile which was the chief memory he had retained of the Venetian picture. Truly, the likeness between the painting and the wife of his friend was marvellous ; and Laurence tried to shake off a morbid wonder whether there might be any obscure and inscrutable survival from one generation to another across the seas and across the years.

"If you remember the picture," said John Manning, "perhaps you remember the quaint goblet of Venetian glass I bought the same day?"

"Of course I do," said Larry, glad to get Manning started on a topic of talk a little less personal.

"Perhaps you know what has become of it?" asked Manning.

"I can answer 'of course' to that, too," replied Larry, "because I have it here."

"Here?"

"Here—in a little square box, in the hall," answered Larry. "I had it in my trunk, you know, when we took passage on the *Vanderbilt* at Havre that May morning. I forgot to give it to you in the hurry of landing, and I haven't had a chance since. This is the first time I have seen you for nearly three years. I found the box this morning, and I thought you might like to have it again, so I brought it up."

John Manning rang the bell at the head of his bed. The black crone answered it, and soon returned with the little square box. Manning im-

patiently broke the seals and cords that bound its cover and began eagerly to release the goblet from the cotton and tissue paper in which it had been carefully swathed and bandaged. Mrs. Manning, though her moods were subtler and more intense, showed an anxiety to see the goblet quite as feverish as her husband's. In a minute the last wrapping was twisted off and the full beauty of the Venetian glass was revealed to them. Assuredly no praise was too loud for its delicate and exquisite workmanship.

"Does Mrs. Manning know the story of the goblet?" asked Larry; "has she been told of the peculiar virtue ascribed to it?"

"She has too great a fondness for the horrible and the fantastic not to have heard the story in its smallest details," said Manning.

Mrs. Manning had taken the glass in her fine, thin hands. Evidently it and its mystic legend had a morbid fascination for her. A strange light gleamed in her wondrous eyes, and Laughton was startled again to see the extraordinary resemblance between her and the picture they had looked at on the day the goblet had been bought.

"When the poison was poured into it," she said at last, with quick and restless glances at the two men, "the glass broke—then the tale was true?"

"It was a coincidence only, I'm afraid," said her husband, who had rallied and regained strength under the unwonted excitement.

Just then the old-fashioned clock on the stairs

struck five. Mrs. Manning started up, holding the goblet in her hand.

"It is time for your medicine," she said.

"As you please," answered her husband wearily, sinking back on his pillow. "My wife insists on giving me every drop of my potions with her own hands. I shall not trouble her much longer, and I doubt if it is any use for her to trouble me now."

"I shall give you everything in this glass after this," she said.

"In the Venetian glass?" asked Larry.

"Yes," she said, turning on him fiercely; "why not?"

"Do you think the doctor is trying to poison me?" asked her husband.

"No, I do not think the doctor is trying to poison you," she repeated mechanically as she moved toward a little sideboard in a corner of the room. "But I shall give you all your medicines in this hereafter."

She stood at the little sideboard, with her back toward them, and she mingled the contents of various phials in the Venetian goblet. Then she turned to cross the room to her husband. As she walked with the glass in her hand there was a rift in the clouds high over the other side of the river, and the rays of the setting sun thrust themselves through the window and lighted up the glory of her hair and showed the strange gleam in her staring eyes. Another step, and the red rays fell on the Venetian glass, and it burned and

glowed, and the green serpents twined about its ruby stem seemed to twist and crawl with malignant life, while their scorching eyes shot fire. Another step, and she stood by the bedside. As John Manning reached out his hand for the goblet, a tremor passed through her, her fingers clinched the fragile stem, and the glass fell on the floor and was shattered to shivers as its fellow had been shattered three centuries ago and more. She still stared steadily before her ; then her lips parted, and she said, " The glass broke—the glass broke—then the tale is true ! " And with one hysteric shriek she fell forward amid the fragments of the Venetian goblet, unconscious thereafter of all things.

Stories by American Authors.

IV.

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Stories by American Authors

IV.

MISS GRIEF.

By CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

LOVE IN OLD CLOATHES.

By H. C. BUNNER.

TWO BUCKETS IN A WELL.

By N. P. WILLIS.

FRIEND BARTON'S CONCERN.

By MARY HALLOCK FOOTE.

AN INSPIRED LOBBYIST.

By J. W. DE FOREST.

LOST IN THE FOG.

By NOAH BROOKS.

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1891

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MISS GRIEF.

BY CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

“ **A** CONCEITED FOOL ” is a not uncommon expression. Now, I know that I am not a fool, but I also know that I am conceited. But, candidly, can it be helped if one happens to be young, well and strong, passably good-looking, with some money that one has inherited and more that one has earned—in all, enough to make life comfortable—and if upon this foundation rests also the pleasant superstructure of a literary success? The success is deserved, I think: certainly it was not lightly gained. Yet even with this I fully appreciate its rarity. Thus, I find myself very well entertained in life: I have all I wish in the way of society, and a deep, though of course carefully concealed, satisfaction in my own little fame; which fame I foster by a gentle system of non-interference. I know that I am spoken of as “ that

quiet young fellow who writes those delightful little studies of society, you know ;” and I live up to that definition.

A year ago I was in Rome, and enjoying life particularly. I had a large number of my acquaintances there, both American and English, and no day passed without its invitation. Of course I understood it : it is seldom that you find a literary man who is good-tempered, well-dressed, sufficiently provided with money, and amiably obedient to all the rules and requirements of “society.” “When found, make a note of it ;” and the note was generally an invitation.

One evening, upon returning to my lodgings, my man Simpson informed me that a person had called in the afternoon, and upon learning that I was absent had left not a card, but her name—“Miss Grief.” The title lingered—Miss Grief ! “Grief has not so far visited me here,” I said to myself, dismissing Simpson and seeking my little balcony for a final smoke, “and she shall not now. I shall take care to be ‘not at home’ to her if she continues to call.” And then I fell to thinking of Isabel Abercrombie, in whose society I had spent that and many evenings : they were golden thoughts.

The next day there was an excursion ; it was late when I reached my rooms, and again Simpson informed me that Miss Grief had called.

“Is she coming continuously ?” I said, half to myself.

"Yes, sir : she mentioned that she should call again."

"How does she look?"

"Well, sir, a lady, but not so prosperous as she was, I should say," answered Simpson, discreetly.

"Young?"

"No, sir."

"Alone?"

"A maid with her, sir."

But once outside in my little high-up balcony with my cigar, I again forgot Miss Grief and whatever she might represent. Who would not forget in that moonlight, with Isabel Abercrombie's face to remember?

The stranger came a third time, and I was absent; then she let two days pass, and began again. It grew to be a regular dialogue between Simpson and myself when I came in at night: "Grief to-day?"

"Yes, sir."

"What time?"

"Four, sir."

"Happy the man," I thought, "who can keep her confined to a particular hour!"

But I should not have treated my visitor so cavalierly if I had not felt sure that she was eccentric and unconventional—qualities extremely tiresome in a woman no longer young or attractive. If she were not eccentric she would not have persisted in coming to my door day after day in this silent way, without stating her errand, leaving a note, or

presenting her credentials in any shape. I made up my mind that she had something to sell—a bit of carving or some intaglio supposed to be antique. It was known that I had a fancy for oddities. I said to myself, “She has read or heard of my ‘Old Gold’ story, or else ‘The Buried God,’ and she thinks me an idealizing ignoramus upon whom she can impose. Her sepulchral name is at least not Italian; probably she is a sharp country-woman of mine, turning, by means of the present æsthetic craze, an honest penny when she can.”

She had called seven times during a period of two weeks without seeing me, when one day I happened to be at home in the afternoon, owing to a pouring rain and a fit of doubt concerning Miss Abercrombie. For I had constructed a careful theory of that young lady’s characteristics in my own mind, and she had lived up to it delightfully until the previous evening, when with one word she had blown it to atoms and taken flight, leaving me standing, as it were, on a desolate shore, with nothing but a handful of mistaken inductions wherewith to console myself. I do not know a more exasperating frame of mind, at least for a constructor of theories. I could not write, and so I took up a French novel (I model myself a little on Balzac). I had been turning over its pages but a few moments when Simpson knocked, and, entering softly, said, with just a shadow of a smile on his well-trained face, “Miss Grief.” I briefly consigned Miss Grief to all the Furies, and then, as

he still lingered—perhaps not knowing where they resided—I asked where the visitor was.

“Outside, sir—in the hall. I told her I would see if you were at home.”

“She must be unpleasantly wet if she had no carriage.”

“No carriage, sir : they always come on foot. I think she *is* a little damp, sir.”

“Well, let her in ; but I don’t want the maid. I may as well see her now, I suppose, and end the affair.”

“Yes, sir.”

I did not put down my book. My visitor should have a hearing, but not much more : she had sacrificed her womanly claims by her persistent attacks upon my door. Presently Simpson ushered her in. “Miss Grief,” he said, and then went out, closing the curtain behind him.

A woman—yes, a lady—but shabby, unattractive, and more than middle-aged.

I rose, bowed slightly, and then dropped into my chair again, still keeping the book in my hand. “Miss Grief?” I said interrogatively as I indicated a seat with my eyebrows.

“Not Grief,” she answered—“Crief : my name is Crief.”

She sat down, and I saw that she held a small flat box.

“Not carving, then,” I thought—“probably old lace, something that belonged to Tullia or Lucrezia Borgia.” But as she did not speak I found myself

obliged to begin : " You have been here, I think, once or twice before ?"

" Seven times ; this is the eighth."

A silence.

" I am often out ; indeed, I may say that I am never in," I remarked carelessly.

" Yes ; you have many friends."

"—Who will perhaps buy old lace," I mentally added. But this time I too remained silent ; why should I trouble myself to draw her out ? She had sought me ; let her advance her idea, whatever it was, now that entrance was gained.

But Miss Grief (I preferred to call her so) did not look as though she could advance anything ; her black gown, damp with rain, seemed to retreat fearfully to her thin self, while her thin self retreated as far as possible from me, from the chair, from everything. Her eyes were cast down ; an old-fashioned lace veil with a heavy border shaded her face. She looked at the floor, and I looked at her.

I grew a little impatient, but I made up my mind that I would continue silent and see how long a time she would consider necessary to give due effect to her little pantomime. Comedy ? Or was it tragedy ? I suppose full five minutes passed thus in our double silence ; and that is a long time when two persons are sitting opposite each other alone in a small still room.

At last my visitor, without raising her eyes, said slowly, " You are very happy, are you not, with youth, health, friends, riches, fame ?"

It was a singular beginning. Her voice was clear, low, and very sweet as she thus enumerated my advantages one by one in a list. I was attracted by it, but repelled by her words, which seemed to me flattery both dull and bold.

"Thanks," I said, "for your kindness," but I fear it is undeserved. I seldom discuss myself even when with my friends."

"I am your friend," replied Miss Grief. Then, after a moment, she added slowly, "I have read every word you have written."

I curled the edges of my book indifferently; I am not a fop, I hope, but—others have said the same.

"What is more, I know much of it by heart," continued my visitor. "Wait: I will show you;" and then, without pause, she began to repeat something of mine word for word, just as I had written it. On she went, and I—listened. I intended interrupting her after a moment, but I did not, because she was reciting so well, and also because I felt a desire gaining upon me to see what she would make of a certain conversation which I knew was coming—a conversation between two of my characters which was, to say the least, sphinx-like, and somewhat incandescent as well. What won me a little, too, was the fact that the scene she was reciting (it was hardly more than that, though called a story) was secretly my favorite among all the sketches from my pen which a gracious public has received with favor. I never

said so, but it was ; and I had always felt a wondering annoyance that the aforesaid public, while kindly praising beyond their worth other attempts of mine, had never noticed the higher purpose of this little shaft, aimed not at the balconies and lighted windows of society, but straight up toward the distant stars. So she went on, and presently reached the conversation : my two people began to talk. She had raised her eyes now, and was looking at me soberly as she gave the words of the woman, quiet, gentle, cold, and the replies of the man, bitter, hot, and scathing. Her very voice changed, and took, though always sweetly, the different tones required, while no point of meaning, however small, no breath of delicate emphasis which I had meant, but which the dull types could not give, escaped an appreciative and full, almost overfull, recognition which startled me. For she had understood me—understood me almost better than I had understood myself. It seemed to me that while I had labored to interpret, partially, a psychological riddle, she, coming after, had comprehended its bearings better than I had, though confining herself strictly to my own words and emphasis. The scene ended (and it ended rather suddenly), she dropped her eyes, and moved her hand nervously to and fro over the box she held ; her gloves were old and shabby, her hands small.

I was secretly much surprised by what I had heard, but my ill-humor was deep-seated that day,

and I still felt sure, besides, that the box contained something which I was expected to buy.

"You recite remarkably well," I said carelessly, "and I am much flattered also by your appreciation of my attempt. But it is not, I presume, to that alone that I owe the pleasure of this visit?"

"Yes," she answered, still looking down, "it is, for if you had not written that scene I should not have sought you. Your other sketches are interiors—exquisitely painted and delicately finished, but of small scope. *This* is a sketch in a few bold, masterly lines—work of entirely different spirit and purpose."

I was nettled by her insight. "You have bestowed so much of your kind attention upon me that I feel your debtor," I said, conventionally. "It may be that there is something I can do for you—connected, possibly, with that little box?"

It was impertinent, but it was true; for she answered, "Yes."

I smiled, but her eyes were cast down and she did not see the smile.

"What I have to show you is a manuscript," she said after a pause which I did not break; "it is a drama. I thought that perhaps you would read it."

"An authoress! This is worse than old lace," I said to myself in dismay.—Then, aloud, "My opinion would be worth nothing, Miss Grief."

"Not in a business way, I know. But it might be—an assistance personally." Her voice had

sunk to a whisper ; outside, the rain was pouring steadily down. She was a very depressing object to me as she sat there with her box.

" I hardly think I have the time at present—" I began.

She had raised her eyes and was looking at me ; then, when I paused, she rose and came suddenly toward my chair. " Yes, you will read it," she said with her hand on my arm—" you will read it. Look at this room ; look at yourself ; look at all you have. Then look at me, and have pity."

I had risen, for she held my arm, and her damp skirt was brushing my knees.

Her large dark eyes looked intently into mine as she went on ; " I have no shame in asking. Why should I have ? It is my last endeavor ; but a calm and well-considered one. If you refuse I shall go away, knowing that Fate has willed it so. And I shall be content."

" She is mad," I thought. But she did not look so, and she had spoken quietly, even gently.— " Sit down," I said, moving away from her. I felt as if I had been magnetized ; but it was only the nearness of her eyes to mine, and their intensity. I drew forward a chair, but she remained standing.

" I cannot," she said in the same sweet, gentle tone, " unless you promise."

" Very well, I promise ; only sit down."

As I took her arm to lead her to the chair I perceived that she was trembling, but her face continued unmoved.

“ You do not, of course, wish me to look at your manuscript now ? ” I said, temporizing ; “ it would be much better to leave it. Give me your address, and I will return it to you with my written opinion ; though, I repeat, the latter will be of no use to you. It is the opinion of an editor or publisher that you want.”

“ It shall be as you please. And I will go in a moment,” said Miss Grief, pressing her palms together, as if trying to control the tremor that had seized her slight frame.

She looked so pallid that I thought of offering her a glass of wine ; then I remembered that if I did it might be a bait to bring her there again, and this I was desirous to prevent. She rose while the thought was passing through my mind. Her pasteboard box lay on the chair she had first occupied ; she took it, wrote an address on the cover, laid it down, and then, bowing with a little air of formality, drew her black shawl round her shoulders and turned toward the door.

I followed, after touching the bell. “ You will hear from me by letter,” I said.

Simpson opened the door, and I caught a glimpse of the maid, who was waiting in the ante-room. She was an old woman, shorter than her mistress, equally thin, and dressed like her in rusty black. As the door opened she turned toward it a pair of small, dim blue eyes with a look of furtive suspense. Simpson dropped the curtain, shutting me into the inner room ; he had no

intention of allowing me to accompany my visitor further. But I had the curiosity to go to a bay-window in an angle from whence I could command the street-door, and presently I saw them issue forth in the rain and walk away side by side, the mistress, being the taller, holding the umbrella : probably there was not much difference in rank between persons so poor and forlorn as these.

It grew dark. I was invited out for the evening, and I knew that if I should go I should meet Miss Abercrombie. I said to myself that I would not go. I got out my paper for writing, I made my preparations for a quiet evening at home with myself ; but it was of no use. It all ended slavishly in my going. At the last allowable moment I presented myself, and—as a punishment for my vacillation, I suppose—I never passed a more disagreeable evening. I drove homeward in a murky temper ; it was foggy without, and very foggy within. What Isabel really was, now that she had broken through my elaborately-built theories, I was not able to decide. There was, to tell the truth, a certain young Englishman— But that is apart from this story.

I reached home, went up to my rooms, and had a supper. It was to console myself ; I am obliged to console myself scientifically once in a while. I was walking up and down afterward, smoking and feeling somewhat better, when my eye fell upon the pasteboard box. I took it up ; on the cover was written an address which showed that my visitor

must have walked a long distance in order to see me : " A. Crief."—" A Grief," I thought ; " and so she is. I positively believe she has brought all this trouble upon me : she has the evil eye." I took out the manuscript and looked at it. It was in the form of a little volume, and clearly written ; on the cover was the word " Armor" in German text, and, underneath, a pen-and-ink sketch of a helmet, breastplate, and shield.

" Grief certainly needs armor," I said to myself, sitting down by the table and turning over the pages. " I may as well look over the thing now ; I could not be in a worse mood." And then I began to read.

Early the next morning Simpson took a note from me to the given address, returning with the following reply : " No ; I prefer to come to you ; at four ; A. CRIEF." These words, with their three semicolons, were written in pencil upon a piece of coarse printing-paper, but the handwriting was as clear and delicate as that of the manuscript in ink.

" What sort of a place was it, Simpson ?"

" Very poor, sir, but I did not go all the way up. The elder person came down, sir, took the note, and requested me to wait where I was."

" You had no chance, then, to make inquiries ?" I said, knowing full well that he had emptied the entire neighborhood of any information it might possess concerning these two lodgers.

" Well, sir, you know how these foreigners will talk, whether one wants to hear or not. But it

seems that these two persons have been there but a few weeks ; they live alone, and are uncommonly silent and reserved. The people round there call them something that signifies 'the Madames American, thin and dumb.' "

At four the "Madames American" arrived ; it was raining again, and they came on foot under their old umbrella. The maid waited in the ante-room, and Miss Grief was ushered into my bachelor's parlor. I had thought that I should meet her with great deference ; but she looked so forlorn that my deference changed to pity. It was the woman that impressed me then, more than the writer—the fragile, nerveless body more than the inspired mind. For it was inspired : I had sat up half the night over her drama, and had felt thrilled through and through more than once by its earnestness, passion, and power.

No one could have been more surprised than I was to find myself thus enthusiastic. I thought I had outgrown that sort of thing. And one would have supposed, too (I myself should have supposed so the day before), that the faults of the drama, which were many and prominent, would have chilled any liking I might have felt, I being a writer myself, and therefore critical ; for writers are as apt to make much of the "how," rather than the "what," as painters, who, it is well known, prefer an exquisitely rendered representation of a commonplace theme to an imperfectly executed picture of even the most striking subject.

But in this case, on the contrary, the scattered rays of splendor in Miss Grief's drama had made me forget the dark spots, which were numerous and disfiguring ; or, rather, the splendor had made me anxious to have the spots removed. And this also was a philanthropic state very unusual with me. Regarding unsuccessful writers, my motto had been " *Væ victis !* "

My visitor took a seat and folded her hands ; I could see, in spite of her quiet manner, that she was in breathless suspense. It seemed so pitiful that she should be trembling there before me—a woman so much older than I was, a woman who possessed the divine spark of genius, which I was by no means sure (in spite of my success) had been granted to me—that I felt as if I ought to go down on my knees before her, and entreat her to take her proper place of supremacy at once. But there ! one does not go down on one's knees, combus- tively, as it were, before a woman over fifty, plain in feature, thin, dejected, and ill-dressed. I contented myself with taking her hands (in their miserable old gloves) in mine, while I said cordially, " Miss Grief, your drama seems to me full of original power. It has roused my enthusiasm : I sat up half the night reading it."

The hands I held shook, but something (perhaps a shame for having evaded the knees business) made me tighten my hold and bestow upon her also a reassuring smile. She looked at me for a moment, and then, suddenly and noiselessly, tears

rose and rolled down her cheeks. I dropped her hands and retreated. I had not thought her tearful: on the contrary, her voice and face had seemed rigidly controlled. But now here she was bending herself over the side of the chair with her head resting on her arms, not sobbing aloud, but her whole frame shaken by the strength of her emotion. I rushed for a glass of wine; I pressed her to take it. I did not quite know what to do, but, putting myself in her place, I decided to praise the drama; and praise it I did. I do not know when I have used so many adjectives. She raised her head and began to wipe her eyes.

"Do take the wine," I said, interrupting myself in my cataract of language.

"I dare not," she answered; then added humbly, "that is, unless you have a biscuit here or a bit of bread."

I found some biscuit; she ate two, and then slowly drank the wine, while I resumed my verbal Niagara. Under its influence—and that of the wine too, perhaps—she began to show new life. It was not that she looked radiant—she could not—but simply that she looked warm. I now perceived what had been the principal discomfort of her appearance heretofore: it was that she had looked all the time as if suffering from cold.

At last I could think of nothing more to say, and stopped. I really admired the drama, but I thought I had exerted myself sufficiently as an anti-hysteric, and that adjectives enough, for the

present at least, had been administered. She had put down her empty wine-glass, and was resting her hands on the broad cushioned arms of her chair with, for a thin person, a sort of expanded content.

"You must pardon my tears," she said, smiling; "it was the revulsion of feeling. My life was at a low ebb: if your sentence had been against me it would have been my end."

"Your end?"

"Yes, the end of my life; I should have destroyed myself."

"Then you would have been a weak as well as wicked woman," I said in a tone of disgust. I do hate sensationalism.

"Oh no, you know nothing about it. I should have destroyed only this poor worn tenement of clay. But I can well understand how *you* would look upon it. Regarding the desirableness of life the prince and the beggar may have different opinions.—We will say no more of it, but talk of the drama instead." As she spoke the word "drama" a triumphant brightness came into her eyes.

I took the manuscript from a drawer and sat down beside her. "I suppose you know that there are faults," I said, expecting ready acquiescence.

"I was not aware that there were any," was her gentle reply.

Here was a beginning! After all my interest in her—and, I may say under the circumstances, my

kindness—she received me in this way ! However, my belief in her genius was too sincere to be altered by her whimsies ; so I persevered. “ Let us go over it together,” I said. “ Shall I read it to you, or will you read it to me ?”

“ I will not read it, but recite it.”

“ That will never do ; you will recite it so well that we shall see only the good points, and what we have to concern ourselves with now is the bad ones.”

“ I will recite it,” she repeated.

“ Now, Miss Crief,” I said bluntly, “ for what purpose did you come to me ? Certainly not merely to recite : I am no stage-manager. In plain English, was it not your idea that I might help you in obtaining a publisher ?”

“ Yes, yes,” she answered, looking at me apprehensively, all her old manner returning.

I followed up my advantage, opened the little paper volume and began. I first took the drama line by line, and spoke of the faults of expression and structure ; then I turned back and touched upon two or three glaring impossibilities in the plot. “ Your absorbed interest in the motive of the whole no doubt made you forget these blemishes,” I said apologetically.

But, to my surprise, I found that she did not see the blemishes—that she appreciated nothing I had said, comprehended nothing. Such unaccountable obtuseness puzzled me. I began again, going over the whole with even greater minuteness and care.

I worked hard : the perspiration stood in beads upon my forehead as I struggled with her—what shall I call it—obstinacy ? But it was not exactly obstinacy. She simply could not see the faults of her own work, any more than a blind man can see the smoke that dims a patch of blue sky. When I had finished my task the second time she still remained as gently impassive as before. I leaned back in my chair exhausted, and looked at her.

Even then she did not seem to comprehend (whether she agreed with it or not) what I must be thinking. “It is such a heaven to me that you like it !” she murmured dreamily, breaking the silence. Then, with more animation, “And *now* you will let me recite it ?”

I was too weary to oppose her ; she threw aside her shawl and bonnet, and, standing in the centre of the room, began.

And she carried me along with her : all the strong passages were doubly strong when spoken, and the faults, which seemed nothing to her, were made by her earnestness to seem nothing to me, at least for that moment. When it was ended she stood looking at me with a triumphant smile.

“Yes,” I said, “I like it, and you see that I do. But I like it because my taste is peculiar. To me originality and force are everything—perhaps because I have them not to any marked degree myself—but the world at large will not overlook as I do your absolutely barbarous shortcomings on account of them. Will you trust me to go over

the drama and correct it at my pleasure?" This was a vast deal for me to offer ; I was surprised at myself.

"No," she answered softly, still smiling. "There shall not be so much as a comma altered." Then she sat down and fell into a reverie as though she were alone.

"Have you written anything else?" I said after a while, when I had become tired of the silence.

"Yes."

"Can I see it? Or is it *them*?"

"It is *them*. Yes, you can see all."

"I will call upon you for the purpose."

"No, you must not," she said, coming back to the present nervously. "I prefer to come to you."

At this moment Simpson entered to light the room, and busied himself rather longer than was necessary over the task. When he finally went out I saw that my visitor's manner had sunk into its former depression : the presence of the servant seemed to have chilled her.

"When did you say I might come?" I repeated, ignoring her refusal.

"I did not say it. It would be impossible."

"Well, then, when will you come here?" There was, I fear, a trace of fatigue in my tone.

"At your good pleasure, sir," she answered humbly.

My chivalry was touched by this : after all, she was a woman. "Come to-morrow," I said. "By

the way, come and dine with me then ; why not ?” I was curious to see what she would reply.

“ Why not, indeed ? Yes, I will come. I am forty-three : I might have been your mother.”

This was not quite true, as I am over thirty : but I look young, while she— Well, I had thought her over fifty. “ I can hardly call you ‘ mother,’ but we might compromise upon ‘ aunt,’ ” I said, laughing. “ Aunt what ?”

“ My name is Aaronna,” she gravely answered. “ My father was much disappointed that I was not a boy, and gave me as nearly as possible the name he had prepared—Aaron.”

“ Then come and dine with me to-morrow, and bring with you the other manuscripts, Aaronna,” I said, amused at the quaint sound of the name. On the whole, I did not like “ aunt.”

“ I will come,” she answered.

It was twilight and still raining, but she refused all offers of escort or carriage, departing with her maid, as she had come, under the brown umbrella. The next day we had the dinner. Simpson was astonished—and more than astonished, grieved—when I told him that he was to dine with the maid ; but he could not complain in words, since my own guest, the mistress, was hardly more attractive. When our preparations were complete I could not help laughing : the two prim little tables, one in the parlor and one in the anteroom, and Simpson disapprovingly going back and forth between them, were irresistible.

I greeted my guest hilariously when she arrived, and, fortunately, her manner was not quite so depressed as usual : I could never have accorded myself with a tearful mood. I had thought that perhaps she would make, for the occasion, some change in her attire ; I have never known a woman who had not some scrap of finery, however small, in reserve for that unexpected occasion of which she is ever dreaming. But no : Miss Grief wore the same black gown, unadorned and unaltered. I was glad that there was no rain that day, so that the skirt did not at least look so damp and rheumatic.

She ate quietly, almost furtively, yet with a good appetite, and she did not refuse the wine. Then, when the meal was over and Simpson had removed the dishes, I asked for the new manuscripts. She gave me an old green copybook filled with short poems, and a prose sketch by itself ; I lit a cigar and sat down at my desk to look them over.

" Perhaps you will try a cigarette ?" I suggested, more for amusement than anything else, for there was not a shade of Bohemianism about her ; her whole appearance was puritanical.

" I have not yet succeeded in learning to smoke."

" You have tried ?" I said, turning round.

" Yes : Serena and I tried, but we did not succeed."

" Serena is your maid ?"

" She lives with me."

I was seized with inward laughter, and began hastily to look over her manuscripts with my back toward her, so that she might not see it. A vision had risen before me of those two forlorn women, alone in their room with locked doors, patiently trying to acquire the smoker's art.

But my attention was soon absorbed by the papers before me. Such a fantastic collection of words, lines, and epithets I had never before seen, or even in dreams imagined. In truth, they were like the work of dreams : they were *Kubla Khan*, only more so. Here and there was radiance like the flash of a diamond, but each poem, almost each verse and line, was marred by some fault or lack which seemed wilful perversity, like the work of an evil sprite. It was like a case of jeweller's wares set before you, with each ring unfinished, each bracelet too large or too small for its purpose, each breastpin without its fastening, each necklace purposely broken. I turned the pages, marvelling. When about half an hour had passed, and I was leaning back for a moment to light another cigar, I glanced toward my visitor. She was behind me, in an easy-chair before my small fire, and she was—fast asleep ! In the relaxation of her unconsciousness I was struck anew by the poverty her appearance expressed ; her feet were visible, and I saw the miserable worn old shoes which hitherto she had kept concealed.

After looking at her for a moment I returned to my task and took up the prose story ; in prose she

must be more reasonable. She was less fantastic perhaps, but hardly more reasonable. The story was that of a profligate and commonplace man forced by two of his friends, in order not to break the heart of a dying girl who loves him, to live up to a high imaginary ideal of himself which her pure but mistaken mind has formed. He has a handsome face and sweet voice, and repeats what they tell him. Her long, slow decline and happy death, and his own inward ennui and profound weariness of the rôle he has to play, made the vivid points of the story. So far, well enough, but here was the trouble: through the whole narrative moved another character, a physician of tender heart and exquisite mercy, who practised murder as a fine art, and was regarded (by the author) as a second Messiah! This was monstrous. I read it through twice, and threw it down; then, fatigued, I turned round and leaned back, waiting for her to wake. I could see her profile against the dark hue of the easy-chair.

Presently she seemed to feel my gaze, for she stirred, then opened her eyes. "I have been asleep," she said, rising hurriedly.

"No harm in that, Aaronna."

But she was deeply embarrassed and troubled, much more so than the occasion required; so much so, indeed, that I turned the conversation back upon the manuscripts as a diversion. "I cannot stand that doctor of yours," I said, indicating the prose story; "no one would. You must cut him out."

Her self-possession returned as if by magic. "Certainly not," she answered haughtily.

"Oh, if you do not care— I had labored under the impression that you were anxious these things should find a purchaser."

"I am, I am," she said, her manner changing to deep humility with wonderful rapidity. With such alternations of feeling as this sweeping over her like great waves, no wonder she was old before her time.

"Then you must take out that doctor."

"I am willing, but do not know how," she answered, pressing her hands together helplessly. "In my mind he belongs to the story so closely that he cannot be separated from it."

Here Simpson entered, bringing a note for me : it was a line from Mrs. Abercrombie inviting me for that evening—an unexpected gathering, and therefore likely to be all the more agreeable. My heart bounded in spite of me ; I forgot Miss Grief and her manuscripts for the moment as completely as though they had never existed. But, bodily, being still in the same room with her, her speech brought me back to the present.

"You have had good news?" she said.

"Oh no, nothing especial—merely an invitation."

"But good news also," she repeated. "And now, as for me, I must go."

Not supposing that she would stay much later in any case, I had that morning ordered a carriage to

come for her at about that hour. I told her this. She made no reply beyond putting on her bonnet and shawl.

"You will hear from me soon," I said ; "I shall do all I can for you."

She had reached the door, but before opening it she stopped, turned and extended her hand. "You are good," she said : "I give you thanks. Do not think me ungrateful or envious. It is only that you are young, and I am so—so old." Then she opened the door and passed through the ante-room without pause, her maid accompanying her and Simpson with gladness lighting the way. They were gone. I dressed hastily and went out—to continue my studies in psychology.

Time passed ; I was busy, amused and perhaps a little excited (sometimes psychology is exciting). But, though much occupied with my own affairs, I did not altogether neglect my self-imposed task regarding Miss Grief. I began by sending her prose story to a friend, the editor of a monthly magazine, with a letter making a strong plea for its admittance. It should have a chance first on its own merits. Then I forwarded the drama to a publisher, also an acquaintance, a man with a taste for phantasms and a soul above mere common popularity, as his own coffers knew to their cost. This done, I waited with conscience clear.

Four weeks passed. During this waiting period I heard nothing from Miss Grief. At last one morning came a letter from my editor. "The

story has force, but I cannot stand that doctor," he wrote. "Let her cut him out, and I might print it." Just what I myself had said. The package lay there on my table, travel-worn and grimed; a returned manuscript is, I think, the most melancholy object on earth. I decided to wait, before writing to Aaronna, until the second letter was received. A week later it came. "Armor" was declined. The publisher had been "impressed" by the power displayed in certain passages, but the "impossibilities of the plot" rendered it "unavailable for publication"—in fact, would "bury it in ridicule" if brought before the public, a public "lamentably" fond of amusement, "seeking it, undaunted, even in the cannon's mouth." I doubt if he knew himself what he meant. But one thing, at any rate, was clear: "Armor" was declined.

Now, I am, as I have remarked before, a little obstinate. I was determined that Miss Grief's work should be received. I would alter and improve it myself, without letting her know: the end justified the means. Surely the sieve of my own good taste, whose mesh had been pronounced so fine and delicate, would serve for two. I began; and utterly failed.

I set to work first upon "Armor." I amended, altered, left out, put in, pieced, condensed, lengthened; I did my best, and all to no avail. I could not succeed in completing anything that satisfied me, or that approached, in truth, Miss

Grief's own work just as it stood. I suppose I went over that manuscript twenty times : I covered sheets of paper with my copies. But the obstinate drama refused to be corrected ; as it was it must stand or fall.

Wearied and annoyed, I threw it aside and took up the prose story : that would be easier. But, to my surprise, I found that that apparently gentle "doctor" would not out : he was so closely interwoven with every part of the tale that to take him out was like taking out one especial figure in a carpet : that is, impossible, unless you unravel the whole. At last I did unravel the whole, and then the story was no longer good, or Aaronna's : it was weak, and mine. All this took time, for of course I had much to do in connection with my own life and tasks. But, though slowly and at my leisure, I really did try my best as regarded Miss Grief, and without success. I was forced at last to make up my mind that either my own powers were not equal to the task, or else that her perversities were as essential a part of her work as her inspirations, and not to be separated from it. Once during this period I showed two of the short poems to Isabel, withholding of course the writer's name. "They were written by a woman," I explained.

"Her mind must have been disordered, poor thing !" Isabel said in her gentle way when she returned them — "at least, judging by these. They are hopelessly mixed and vague."

Now, they were not vague so much as vast. But I knew that I could not make Isabel comprehend it, and (so complex a creature is man) I do not know that I wanted her to comprehend it. These were the only ones in the whole collection that I would have shown her, and I was rather glad that she did not like even these. Not that poor Aaronna's poems were evil: they were simply unrestrained, large, vast, like the skies or the wind. Isabel was bounded on all sides, like a violet in a garden-bed. And I liked her so.

One afternoon, about the time when I was beginning to see that I could not "improve" Miss Grief, I came upon the maid. I was driving, and she had stopped on the crossing to let the carriage pass. I recognized her at a glance (by her general forlornness), and called to the driver to stop: "How is Miss Grief?" I said. "I have been intending to write to her for some time."

"And your note, when it comes," answered the old woman on the crosswalk fiercely, "she shall not see."

"What?"

"I say she shall not see it. Your patronizing face shows that you have no good news, and you shall not rack and stab her any more on *this* earth, please God, while I have authority."

"Who has racked or stabbed her, Serena?"

"Serena, indeed! Rubbish! I'm no Serena: I'm her aunt. And as to who has racked and stabbed her, I say you, *you*—you literary men!"

She had put her old head inside my carriage, and flung out these words at me in a shrill, menacing tone. "But she shall die in peace in spite of you," she continued. "Vampires! you take her ideas and fatten on them, and leave her to starve. You know you do—you who have had her poor manuscripts these months and months!"

"Is she ill?" I asked in real concern, gathering that much at least from the incoherent tirade.

"She is dying," answered the desolate old creature, her voice softening and her dim eyes filling with tears.

"Oh, I trust not. Perhaps something can be done. Can I help you in any way?"

"In all ways if you would," she said, breaking down and beginning to sob weakly, with her head resting on the sill of the carriage-window. "Oh, what have we not been through together, we two! Piece by piece I have sold all."

I am good-hearted enough, but I do not like to have old women weeping across my carriage-door. I suggested, therefore, that she should come inside and let me take her home. Her shabby old skirt was soon beside me, and, following her directions, the driver turned toward one of the most wretched quarters of the city, the abode of poverty, crowded and unclean. Here, in a large bare chamber up many flights of stairs, I found Miss Grief.

As I entered I was startled: I thought she was dead. There seemed no life present until she opened her eyes, and even then they rested upon

us vaguely, as though she did not know who we were. But as I approached a light came into them : she recognized me, and this sudden revivification, this return of the soul to the almost deserted bod, was the most wonderful thing I ever saw. " You have good news of the drama ? " she whispered as I bent over her : " tell me. I *know* you have good news."

What was I to answer ? Pray, what would you have answered, puritan ?

" Yes, I have good news, Aaronna," I said. " The drama will appear." (And who knows ? Perhaps it will in some other world.)

She smiled, and her now brilliant eyes did not leave my face.

" He knows I'm your aunt : I told him," said the old woman, coming to the bedside.

" Did you ? " whispered Miss Grief, still gazing at me with a smile. " Then please, dear Aunt Martha, give me something to eat."

Aunt Martha hurried across the room, and I followed her. " It's the first time she's asked for food in weeks," she said in a husky tone.

She opened a cupboard-door vaguely, but I could see nothing within. " What have you for her ? " I asked with some impatience, though in a low voice.

" Please God, nothing !" answered the poor old woman, hiding her reply and her tears behind the broad cupboard-door. " I was going out to get a little something when I met you."

“ Good Heavens ! is it money you need ? Here, take this and send ; or go yourself in the carriage waiting below.”

She hurried out breathless, and I went back to the bedside, much disturbed by what I had seen and heard. But Miss Grief’s eyes were full of life, and as I sat down beside her she whispered earnestly, “ Tell me.”

And I did tell her—a romance invented for the occasion. I venture to say that none of my published sketches could compare with it. As for the lie involved, it will stand among my few good deeds, I know, at the judgment-bar.

And she was satisfied. “ I have never known what it was,” she whispered, “ to be fully happy until now.” She closed her eyes, and when the lids fell I again thought that she had passed away. But no, there was still pulsation in her small, thin wrist. As she perceived my touch she smiled. “ Yes, I am happy,” she said again, though without audible sound.

The old aunt returned ; food was prepared, and she took some. I myself went out after wine that should be rich and pure. She rallied a little, but I did not leave her : her eyes dwelt upon me and compelled me to stay, or rather my conscience compelled me. It was a damp night, and I had a little fire made. The wine, fruit, flowers, and candles I had ordered made the bare place for the time being bright and fragrant. Aunt Martha dozed in her chair from sheer fatigue—she had

watched many nights—but Miss Grief was awake, and I sat beside her.

“I make you my executor,” she murmured, “as to the drama. But my other manuscripts place, when I am gone, under my head, and let them be buried with me. They are not many—those you have and these. See!”

I followed her gesture, and saw under her pillows the edges of two more copybooks like the one I had. “Do not look at them—my poor dead children!” she said tenderly. “Let them depart with me—unread, as I have been.”

Later she whispered, “Did you wonder why I came to you? It was the contrast. You were young—strong—rich—praised—loved—successful: all that I was not. I wanted to look at you—and imagine how it would feel. You had success—but I had the greater power. Tell me, did I not have it?”

“Yes, Aaronna.”

“It is all in the past now. But I am satisfied.”

After another pause she said with a faint smile, “Do you remember when I fell asleep in your parlor? It was the good and rich food. It was so long since I had had food like that!”

I took her hand and held it, conscience-stricken, but now she hardly seemed to perceive my touch. “And the smoking?” she whispered. “Do you remember how you laughed? I saw it. But I had heard that smoking soothed—that one was no longer tired and hungry—with a cigar.”

In little whispers of this sort, separated by long rests and pauses, the night passed. Once she asked if her aunt was asleep, and when I answered in the affirmative she said, "Help her to return home—to America : the drama will pay for it. I ought never to have brought her away."

I promised, and she resumed her bright-eyed silence.

I think she did not speak again. Toward morning the change came, and soon after sunrise, with her old aunt kneeling by her side, she passed away.

All was arranged as she had wished. Her manuscripts, covered with violets, formed her pillow. No one followed her to the grave save her aunt and myself ; I thought she would prefer it so. Her name was not "Crief," after all, but "Mon-crief ;" I saw it written out by Aunt Martha for the coffin-plate, as follows : "Aaronna Moncrief, aged forty-three years, two months, and eight days."

I never knew more of her history than is written here. If there was more that I might have learned, it remained unlearned, for I did not ask.

And the drama ? I keep it here in this locked case. I could have had it published at my own expense ; but I think that now she knows its faults herself, perhaps, and would not like it.

I keep it ; and, once in a while, I read it over—not as a *memento mori* exactly, but rather as a memento of my own good fortune, for which I should con-

tinually give thanks. The want of one grain made all her work void, and that one grain was given to me. She, with the greater power, failed—I, with the less, succeeded. But no praise is due to me for that. When I die “Armor” is to be destroyed unread: not even Isabel is to see it. For women will misunderstand each other; and, dear and precious to me as my sweet wife is, I could not bear that she or any one should cast so much as a thought of scorn upon the memory of the writer, upon my poor dead, “unavailable,” unaccepted “Miss Grief.”

LOVE IN OLD CLOATHES.

BY H. C. BUNNER.

NEWE YORK, y^e 1st Aprile, 1883.

Y^e worste of my ailment is this, y^t it groweth not Less with much nursinge, but is like to those fevres w^{ch} y^e leeches Starve, 'tis saide, for that y^e more Bloode there be in y^e Sicke man's Bodie, y^e more foode is there for y^e Distemper to feede upon. —And it is moste fittinge y^t I come backe to y^s my Journall (wherein I have not writt a Lyne these manye months) on y^e 1st of Aprile, beinge in some Sort myne owne foole and y^e foole of Love, and a poore Butt on whome his hearte hath play'd a Sorry tricke.—

For it is surelie a strange happeninge, that I, who am ofte accompted a man of y^e Worlde, (as y^e Phrase goes,) sholde be soe Overtaken & caste downe lyke a Schoole-boy or a countrie Bumpkin, by a meere Mayde, & sholde set to Groaninge and Sighinge, &, for that She will not have me Sighe to

Her, to Groaninge and Sighinge on paper, w^{ch} is y^e greter Foolishnesse in Me, y^t some one maye reade it Here-after, who hath taken his dose of y^e same Physicke, and made no Wrye faces over it ; in w^{ch} case I doubt I shall be much laugh'd at.— Yet soe much am I a foole, and soe enamour'd of my Foolishnesse, y^t I have a sorte of Shamefull Joye in tellinge, even to my Journall, y^t I am mightie deepe in Love withe y^e yonge Daughter of Mistresse Ffrench, and all maye knowe what an Angell is y^e Daughter, since I have chose M^{rs}. French for my Mother in Lawe.—(Though she will have none of my choosinge.)—And I likewise take comforte in y^e Fancie, y^t this poore Sheete, wh^{on} I write, may be made of y^e Raggs of some lucklesse Lover, and maye y^e more readilie drinke up my complaininge Inke.—

This muche I have learnt y^t Fraunce distilles not, nor y^e Indies growe not, y^e Remedie for my Aile.—For when I 1st became sensible of y^e folly of my Suite, I tooke to drynkinge & smoakinge, thinkinge to cure my minde, but all I got was a head ache, for fellow to my Hearte ache.—A sorrie Payre !—I then made Shifte, for a while, withe a Bicycle, but breakinge of Bones mendes no breakinge of Heartes, and 60 myles a Daye brings me no nearer to a Weddinge.—This beinge Lowe Sondag, (w^{ch} my Hearte telleth me better than y^e Allmanack,) I will goe to Church ; wh. I maye chaunce to see her.—Laste weeke, her Eastre bonnett vastlie pleas'd me, beinge most cunninglie

devys'd in y^e mode of oure Grandmothers, and verie lyke to a coales Scuttle, of white satine.—

2nd Aprile.

I trust I make no more moane, than is just for a man in my case, but there is small comforte in lookinge at y^e backe of a white Satine bonnett for two Houres, and I maye saye as much.—Neither any cheere in Her goinge out of y^e Church, & Walkinge downe y^e Avenue, with a Puppe by y^e name of Williamson.

4th Aprile.

Because a man have a Hatt with a Brimme to it like y^e Poope-Decke of a Steam-Shippe, and breeches lyke y^e Case of an umbrella, and have loste money on Hindoo, he is not therefore in y^e beste Societie.—I made this observation, at y^e Clubbe, laste nighte, in y^e hearinge of W^{mson}, who made a mightie Pretence, to reade y^e Sp^t of y^e Tymes.—I doubte it was scurvie of me, but it did me muche goode.

7th Aprile.

Y^e manner of my meetinge with Her and fallinge in Love with Her (for y^e two were of one date) is thus—I was made acquainte withe Her on a Wednesdaye, at y^e House of Mistresse Varick, ('twas a Reception,) but did not hear Her Name, nor She myne, by reason of y^e noise, and of M^{rsse} Varick having but lately a newe sett of Teethe, of wh. she had not yet gott, as it were, y^e just Pitche and accordance.—I sayde to Her that y^e Weather was

warm for that season of y^e yeare.—She made answer She thought I was right, for Mr Williamson had saide y^e same thinge to Her not a minute past—I tolde Her She muste not holde it originall or an Invention of W^mson, for y^e Speache had bene manie yeares in my Familie.—Answer was made, She wolde be muche bounden to me if I wolde maintaine y^e Rightes of my Familie, and lett all others from usinge of my propertie, when perceivinge Her to be of a livelie Witt, I went about to ingage her in converse, if onlie so I mighte looke into Her Eyes, wh. were of a coloure suche as I have never seene before, more like to a Pansie, or some such flower, than anything else I can compare with them.—Shortlie we grew most friendlie, so that She did aske me if I colde keepe a Secrett.—I answering I colde, She saide She was anhungred, having Shopp'd all y^e forenoone since Breakfast.—She pray'd me to gett Her some Foode.—What, I ask'd.—She answer'd merrilie, a Beafesteake.—I tolde Her y^t that *Confection* was not on y^e Side-Boarde ; but I presentlie brought Her such as there was, & She beinge behinde a Screane, I stöode in y^e waie, so y^t none mighte see Her, & She did eate and drynke as followeth, to witt—

iiij cupps of Bouillon (w^{ch} is a Tea, or Tisane, of
Beafe, made verie hott & thinne)

iv Alberte biscuit

ij éclairs

i creame-cake

together with divers small cates & comfeits wh^{of} I know not y^e names.

So y^t I was grievously afeard for Her Digestion, leste it be over-tax'd. Saide this to Her, however addinge it was my Conceite, y^t by some Processe, lyke Alchemie, wh^{by} y^e baser metals are transmuted into golde, so y^e grosse mortall foode was on Her lippes chang'd to y^e fabled Nectar & Ambrosia of y^e Gods.—She tolde me 'twas a sillie Speache, yet seam'd not ill-pleas'd withall.—She hath a verie prettie Fashion, or Tricke, of smilinge, when She hath made an end of speakinge, and layinge Her finger upon Her nether Lippe, like as She wolde bid it be stille. — After some more Talke, whⁱⁿ She show'd that Her Witt was more deepe, and Her minde more seriouslie inclin'd, than I had Thoughte from our first Jestinge, She beinge call'd to go thence, I did see Her mother, whose face I knewe, & was made sensible, y^t I had given my Hearte to y^e daughter of a House wh. with myne owne had longe been at grievous Feud, for y^e folly of oure Auncestres.—Havinge come to wh. heavie momente in my Tale, I have no Patience to write more to-nighte.

22nd Aprile.

I was mynded to write no more in y^s journall, for verie Shame's sake, y^t I shoude so complayne, lyke a Childe, whose toie is taken f^m him, butt (mayhapp for it is nowe y^e fulle Moone, & a moste greavous period for them y^t are Love-strucke) I am

fayne, lyke y^e Drunkarde who maye not abstayne f^m his cupp, to set me anewe to recordinge of My Dolorous mishapp.—When I sawe Her agayn, She beinge aware of my name, & of y^e division betwixt oure Houses, wolde have none of me, butt I wolde nott be putt Off, & made bolde to question Her, why She sholde showe me suche exceed^g Coldness.—She answer'd, 'twas wel knowne what Wronge my Grandefather had done Her G.father.—I saide, She confounded me with My G.father—we were nott y^e same Persone, he beinge muche my Elder, & besydes Deade.—She w^d have it, 'twas no matter for jestinge.—I tolde Her, I wolde be resolv'd, what grete Wronge y^{is} was.—Y^s more for to make Speache thⁿ for mine owne advertisem^t, for I knewe wel y^e whole Knaverie, wh. She rehears'd, Howe my G.father had cheated Her G.father of Landes upp y^e River, with more, howe my G.father had impounded y^e Cattle of Hern.—I made answer, 'twas foolishnesse, in my mynde, for y^e iii^d Generation to so quarrell over a Parsel of rascallie Landes, y^t had long ago beene solde for Taxes, y^t as to y^e Cowes, I wolde make them goode, & th^r Produce & Offspringe, if it tooke y^e whole Wash^{tn} Markett.—She however tolde me y^t y^e Ffrenche familie had y^e where w^{al} to buye what they lack'd in Butter, Beafe & Milke, and likewise in *Veale*, wh. laste I tooke much to Hearte, wh. She seeinge, became more gracious &, on my pleadinge, accorded y^t I sholde have y^e Privilege to speake with Her when we next met.—Butt neyther then, nor

at anie other Tyme th^{after} wolde She suffer me to visitt Her. So I was harde putt to it to compass waies of gettinge to see Her at such Houses as She mighte be att, for Routs or Feasts, or y^e lyke.—

But though I sawe Her manie tymes, oure converse was ever of y^{is} Complexⁿ, & y^e accursed G.father satt downe, & rose upp with us.—Yet colde I see by Her aspecte, y^t I had in some sorte Her favoure, & y^t I mislyk'd Her not so gretelie as She w^d have me thinke.—So y^t one daie, ('twas in Januarie, & verie colde,) I, beinge moste distrackt, saide to Her, I had tho't 'twolde pleasure Her more, to be friends w. a man, who had a knave for a G.father, yⁿ with One who had no G.father att alle, lyke W^{mson} (y^e Puppe).—She made answer, I was exceedinge fresshe, or some such matter. She cloath'd her thoughte in phrase more befittinge a Gentlewoman.—Att this I colde no longer contayne myself, but tolde Her roundlie, I lov'd Her, & 'twas my Love made me soe unmannerlie.—And w. y^{is} speache I att y^e leaste made an End of my Uncertaintie, for She bade me speake w. Her no more.—I wolde be determin'd, whether I was Naught to Her.—She made Answer She colde not justlie say I was Naught, seeing y^t wh^{ever} She mighte bee, I was One too manie.—I saide, 'twas some Comforte, I had even a Place in Her thoughtes, were it onlie in Her disfavour.—She saide, my Solace was indeede grete, if it kept pace with y^e measure of Her Disfavour, for, in plain Terms, She hated me, & on Her intreatinge of me

to goe, I went.—Y^{is} happ'd att y^e house of M^{rss} Varicke, wh. I 1st met Her, who (M^{rss} Varicke) was for staying me, y^t I might eate some Ic'd Cream, butt of a Truth I was chill'd to my Taste all-readie.—Albeit I afterwards tooke to walkinge of y^e Streets till near Midnight.—'Twas as I saide before in Januarie & exceedinge colde.

20th Maie.

How wearie is y^{is} dulle procession of y^e Yeare ! For it irketh my Soule y^t eache Monthe shoude come so aptlie after y^e Month afore, & Nature looke so Smug, as She had done some grete thinge.—Surelie if she make no Change, she hath work'd no Miracle, for we knowe wel, what we maye look for.—Y^e Vine under my Window hath broughte forth Purple Blossoms, as itt hath eache Springe these xii Yeares.—I wolde have had them Redd, or Blue, or I knowe not what Coloure, for I am sicke of likinge of Purple a Dozen Springes in Order.—And wh. moste galls me is y^{is}, I knowe howe y^{is} sadd Rounde will goe on, & Maie give Place to June, & she to July, & onlie my Hearte blossom not nor my Love growe no greener.

2nd June.

I and my Foolishnesse, we laye Awake last night till y^e Sunrise gun, wh. was Shott att 4½ o'ck, & wh. beinge hearde in y^t stillnesse fm. an Incredible Distance, seem'd lyke as 'twere a Full Stopp, or Period putt to y^{is} Wakinge-Dreminge, wh^{at} I did

turne a newe Leafe in my Counsell, and after much Meditation, have commenc't a newe Chapter, wh. I hope maye leade to a better Conclusion, than them y^t came afore.—For I am nowe resolv'd; & havinge begunn wil carry to an Ende, y^t if I maie not over-come my Passion, I maye at y^e least over-com y^e Melanchollie, & Spleene, borne y^{of}, & beinge a Lover, be none y^e lesse a Man.—To wh. Ende I have come to y^{is} Resolution, to departe fm. y^e Towne, & to goe to y^e Countrie-House of my Frend, Will Winthrop, who has often intreated me, & has instantlie urg'd, y^t I sholde make him a Visitt.—And I take much Shame to mysele, y^t I have not given him y^{is} Satisfaction since he was married, wh. is nowe ii Yeares.—A goode Fellowe, & I minde me a grete Burden to his Friends when he was in Love, in wh. Plight I mockt him, who am nowe, I much feare me, mockt mysele.

3rd June.

Pack'd my cloathes, beinge Sundaye. Y^e better y^e Daie, y^e better y^e Deede.

4th June.

Goe downe to Babylon to-daye.

5th June.

Att Babylon, att y^e Cottage of Will Winthrop, wh. is no Cottage, but a grete House, Red, w. Verandahs, & builded in y^e Fashⁿ of Her Maiestie Q. Anne.—Found a mightie Housefull of People.

—Will, his Wife, a verie proper fayre Ladie, who gave me moste gracious Reception, M^{rss} Smithe, y^e ii Gresham girles (knowne as y^e Titteringe Twins), Bob White, Virginia Kinge & her Moth^r, Clarence Winthrop, & y^e whole Alexander Family.—A grete Gatheringe for so earlie in y^e Summer.—In y^e afternoone play'd Lawne-Tenniss.—Had for Partner one of y^e Twinns, agst Clarence Winthrop & y^e other Twinn, wh. by beinge Confus'd, I loste iii games.—Was voted a Duffer.—Clarence Winthrop moste unmannerlie merrie.—He call'd me y^e Sad-Ey'd Romeo, & lykewise cut down y^e Hammocke whⁱⁿ I laye, allso tied up my Cloathes wh. we were att Bath.—He sayde, he Chaw'd them, a moste barbarous worde for a moste barbarous Use.—Wh. we were Boyes, & he did y^{is} thinge, I was wont to trounce him Soundlie, but nowe had to contente Myselfe w. beateinge of him iii games of Billyardes in y^e Evg., & w. daringe of him to putt on y^e Gloves w. me, for Funne, wh. he mighte not doe, for I coude knocke him colde.

10th June.

Beinge gon to my Roome somewhatt earlie, for I found myselfe of a peevish humour, Clarence came to me, and pray^d a few minutes' Speache.—Sayde 'twas Love made him so Rude & Boysterous he was privilie betroth'd to his Cozen, Angelica Robertes, she whose Father lives at Islipp, & colde not containe Himselfe for Joye.—I sayinge, there was a Breache in y^e Familie, he made

Answer, 'twas true, her Father & His, beinge Cozens, did hate each other moste heartilie, butt for him he cared not for that, & for Angelica, She gave not a Continentall.—But, sayde I, Your Consideration matters mightie Little, synce y^e Governours will not heare to it.—He answered 'twas for that he came to me, I must be his allie, for reason of our olde Friend^{sp}. With that I had no Hearte to heare more, he made so Light of suche a Division as parted me & my Happinesse, but tolde him I was his Frend, wolde serve him when he had Neede of me, & presentlie seeing my Humour, he made excuse to goe, & left me to write downe this, sicke in Mynde, and thinkinge ever of y^e Woman who wil not oute of my Thoughtes for any change of Place, neither of employe.—For indeede I doe love Her moste heartilie, so y^t my Wordes can not saye it, nor will y^{is} Booke containe it.—So I wil even goe to Sleepe, y^t in my Dreames perchaunce my Fancie maye do my Hearte better Service.

12th June.

She is here.—What Spyte is y^{is} of Fate & y^e alter'd gods ! That I, who mighte nott gett to see Her when to See was to Hope, muste nowe daylie have Her in my Sichte, stucke lyke a fayre Apple under olde Tantalus his Nose.—Goinge downe to y^e Hotell to-day, for to gett me some Tobackoe, was made aware y^t y^e Ffrench familie had hyred one of y^e Cottages round-about.—'Tis a goodlie

Dwellinge Without—Woude I coude speake with
as much Assurance of y^e Innsyde !

13th June.

Goinge downe to y^e Hotell againe To-day, for
more Tobackoe, sawe y^e accursed name of W^{mson}
on y^e Registre.—Went about to a neighbouringe
Farm & satt me downe behynd y^e Barne, for a ½
an Houre.—Frighted y^e Horned Cattle w. talkinge
to My Selfe.

15th June.

I wil make an Ende to y^{ls} Businesse.—Wil make
no longer Staye here.—Sawe Her to-day, driven
Home fm. y^e Beache, about 4½ of y^e After-noone,
by W^{mson}, in his Dogge-Carte, wh. y^e Cadde has
broughten here.—Wil betake me to y^e Boundlesse
Weste—Not y^t I care aught for y^e Boundlesse
Weste, butt y^t I shal doe wel if haplie I leave my
Memourie am^g y^e Apaches & bringe Home my
Scalpe.

16th June.

To Fyre Islande, in Winthrop's Yacht — y^e
Twinnes w. us, so Titteringe & Choppinge Laugh-
ter, y^t 'twas worse yⁿ a Flocke of Sandpipers.—
Found a grete Concourse of people there, Her
amonge them, in a Suite of blue, y^t became
Her bravelie.—She swimms lyke to a Fishe, butt
everie Stroke of Her white Arms (of a lovelie
Roundnesse) clefted, as 't were, my Hearte, rather

yⁿ y^e Water.—She bow'd to me, on goinge into y^e Water, w. muche Dignitie, & agayn on Cominge out, but y^{is} Tyme w. lesse Dignitie, by reason of y^e Water in Her Cloathes, & Her Haire in Her Eyes.—

17th June.

Was for goinge awaie To-morrowe, butt Clarence cominge againe to my Chamber, & mightilie purswadinge of me, I feare I am comitted to a verie sillie Undertakinge.—For I am promis'd to Help him, secretlie to wedd his Cozen.—He wolde take no Deniall, wolde have it, his Brother car'd Naughte, 'twas but y^e Fighte of theyre Fathers, he was bounde it sholde be done, & 'twere best I stode his Witnesse, who was wel lyked of bothe y^e Branches of y^e Family.—So 'twas agree'd, y^t I shal stay Home to-morrowe fm. y^e Expedition to Fyre Islande, feigning a Head-Ache, (wh. indeede I meante to do, in any Happ, for I cannot see Her againe,) & shall meet him at y^e little Church on y^e Southe Roade.—He to drive to Islipp to fetch Angelica, lykewise her Witnesse, who sholde be some One of y^e Girles, she hadd not yet made her Choice.—I made y^{is} Condition, it sholde not be either of y^e Twinnes.—No, nor Bothe, for that matter.—Inquiringe as to y^e Clergyman, he sayde y^e Dominie was allreadie Squar'd.

NEWE YORK, Y^r BUCKINGHAM HOTELL,
19th June.

I am come to y^e laste Entrie I shall ever putt downe in y^s Booke, and needes must y^t I putt it downe quicklie, for all hath Happ'd in so short a Space, y^t my Heade whirles w. thynkinge of it. Y^e after-noone of Yesterdaye, I set about Counterfeittinge of a Head-Ache, & so wel did I compasse it, y^t I verilie thinke one of y^e Twinnes was mynded to Stay Home & nurse me.—All havinge gone off, & Clarence on his waye to Islipp, I sett forth for y^e Church, where arriv'd I founde it emptie, w. y^e Door open.—Went in & writh'd on y^e hard Benches a $\frac{1}{4}$ of an Houre, when, hearinge a Sounde, I look'd up & saw standinge in y^e Door-waye, Katherine Ffrench.—She seem'd mucche astonished, saying You Here ! or y^e lyke.—I made Answer & sayde y^t though my Familie were greate Sinners, yet had they never been Excommunicate by y^e Church.—She sayde, they colde not Putt Out what never was In.—While I was bethynkinge me wh. I mighte answer to y^{is}, she went on, sayinge I must excuse Her, She wolde goe upp in y^e Organ-Lofte.—I enquiring what for ? She sayde to practice on y^e Organ.—She turn'd verie Redd, of a warm Coloure, as She sayde this.—I ask'd Do you come hither often ? She replyinge Yes, I enquir'd how y^e Organ lyked Her.—She sayde Right well, when I made question more curiously (for She grew more Redd eache moment) how was y^e Action ? y^e Tone ? how manie Stopps ? Wh^{at} She growinge

gretelie Confus'd, I led Her into y^e Church, & show'd Her y^t there was no Organ, y^e Choire beinge indeede a Band, of i Tuninge-Forke, i Kitt, & i Horse-Fiddle.—At this She fell to Smilinge & Blushing att one Tyme.—She perceiv'd our Errandes were y^e Same, & crav'd Pardon for Her Fibb.—I tolde Her, If She came Thither to be Witness at her Frend's Weddinge, 'twas no greate Fibb, 'twolde indeede be Practice for Her.—This havinge a rude Sound, I added I thank't y^e Starrs y^t had bro't us Together. She sayde if y^e Starrs appoint'd us to meete no oftener yⁿ this Couple shoude be Wedded, She was wel content. This cominge on me lyke a last Buffett of Fate, that She shoude so despitefully intreate me, I was suddenlie Seized with so Sorrie a Humour, & withal so angrie, y^t I colde scarce Containe mysele, but went & Sat downe neare y^e Doore, lookinge out till Clarence shd. come w. his Bride.—Looking over my Sholder, I sawe y^t She wente fm. Windowe to Windowe within, Pluckinge y^e Blossoms fm. y^e Vines, & settinge them in her Girdle.—She seem'd most tall and faire, & swete to look uponn, & itt Anger'd me y^e More.—Meanwhiles, She discours'd pleasantlie, askinge me manie questions, to the wh. I gave but shorte and churlish answers. She ask'd Did I nott Knowe Angelica Roberts was Her best Frend? How longe had I knowne of y^e Betrothal? Did I thinke 'twolde knitt y^e House together, & Was it not Sad to see a Familie thus Divided?—I answer'd Her, I wd. not robb a Man

of y^e precious Righte to Quarrell with his Relations.—And then, with meditatinge on y^e goode Lucke of Clarence, & my owne harde Case, I had suche a sudden Rage of peevishnesse y^t I knewe scarcelie what I did.—Soe when She ask'd me mer-rilie why I turn'd my Backe on Her, I made Reply I had turn'd my Backe on muche Follie.—Wh. was no sooner oute of my Mouthe than I was mightilie Sorrie for it, and turninge aboute, I perceiv'd She was in Teares & weepinge bitterlie. Wh^{at} my Heart wolde holde no More, & I rose upp & tooke Her in my arms & Kiss'd & Comforted Her, She makeinge no Denyal, but seeminge gretelie to Neede such Solace, wh. I was not Loathe to give Her.—Whiles we were at This, onlie She had gott to Smilinge, & to sayinge of Things which even y^{is} paper shal not knowe, came in y^e Dominie, sayinge He judg'd We were the Couple he came to Wed.—With him y^e Sexton & y^e Sexton's Wife.—My swete Kate, alle as rosey as Venus's Nape, was for Denyinge of y^{is}, butt I wolde not have it, & sayde Yes.—She remonstrating w. me, privilie, I tolde Her She must not make me Out a Liar, y^t to Deceave y^e Man of God were a greavous Sinn, y^t I had gott Her nowe, & wd. not lett her Slipp from me, & did soe Talke Her Downe, & w. suche Strengthe of joie, y^t allmost before She knewe it, we Stood upp, & were Wed, w. a Ringe (tho' She Knewe it nott) wh. belong'd to My G.father. (Him y^t Cheated Herⁿ.)—

Wh. was no sooner done, than in came Clarence & Angelica, & were Wedded in theyre Turn.—The

Clergyman greatelie surprised, but more att y^e Largenesse of his Fee.

This Businesse beinge Ended, we fled by y^e Trayne of 4½ o'cke, to y^{is} Place, where we wait till y^e Bloode of all y^e Ffrenches have Tyme to coole downe, for y^e wise Mann who meeteth his Mother in Lawe y^e 1st tyme, wil meete her when she is Milde.—

And so I close y^{is} Journall, wh., tho' for y^e moste Parte 'tis but a peevish Scrawle, hath one Page of Golde, wh^{on} I have writt y^e laste strange Happ wh^{by} I have layd Williamson by y^e Heeles & found me y^e sweetest Wife y^t ever

* * *

stopp'd a man's Mouthe w. kisses for writinge of Her Prayses.

TWO BUCKETS IN A WELL.

BY N. P. WILLIS.

"FIVE hundred dollars a year!" echoed Fanny Bellairs, as the first silver gray of the twilight spread over her picture.

"And my art," modestly added the painter, prying into his bright copy of the lips pronouncing upon his destiny.

"And how much may that be, at the present rate of patronage — one picture a year, painted for love!"

"Fanny, how can you be so calculating!"

"By the bumps over my eyebrows, I suppose. Why, my dear coz, we have another state of existence to look forward to — old man-age and old woman-age! What am I to do with five hundred dollars a year, when my old frame wants gilding — (to use one of your own similes) — I sha'n't always be pretty Fanny Bellairs!"

“ But, good Heavens ! we shall grow old together ! ” exclaimed the painter, sitting down at her feet, “ and what will you care for other admiration, if your husband see you still beautiful, with the eyes of memory and habit. ”

“ Even if I were sure he would so look upon me, ” answered Miss Bellairs, more seriously, “ I cannot but dread an old age without great means of embellishment. Old people, except in poetry and in very primitive society, are dishonored by wants and cares. And, indeed, before we are old—when neither young nor old—we want horses and ottomans, kalydor and conservatories, books, pictures, and silk curtains—all quite out of the range of your little allowance, don’t you see ! ”

“ You do not love me, Fanny ! ”

“ I do—and will marry you, Philip—as I, long ago, with my whole heart, promised. But I wish to be happy with you—as happy, quite as happy, as is at all possible, with our best efforts, and coolest, discreetest management. I laugh the matter over sometimes, but I may tell you, since you are determined to be in earnest, that I have treated it, in my solitary thought, as the one important event of my life—(so indeed it is !)—and, as such, worthy of all forethought, patience, self-denial, and calculation. To inevitable ills I can make up my mind like other people. If your art were your only hope of subsistence—why—I don’t know—(should I look well as a page ?)—I don’t know that I couldn’t run your errands and grind

your paints in hose and doublet. But there is another door open for you—a counting-house door, to be sure—leading to opulence and all the appliances of dignity and happiness, and through this door, my dear Philip, the art you would live by comes to pay tribute and beg for patronage. Now, out of your hundred and twenty reasons, give me the two stoutest and best, why you should refuse your brother's golden offer of partnership—my share, in your alternative of poverty, left for the moment out of the question.”

Rather overborne by the confident decision of his beautiful cousin, and having probably made up his mind that he must ultimately yield to her, Philip replied in a lower and more dejected tone :

“ If you were not to be a sharer in my renown, should I be so fortunate as to acquire it, I should feel as if it were selfish to dwell so much on my passion for distinction, and my devotion to my pencil as a means of winning it. My heart is full of you—but it is full of ambition, too, paradox though it be. I cannot live ignoble. I should not have felt worthy to press my love upon you—worthy to possess you—except with the prospect of celebrity in my art. You make the world dark to me, Fanny ! You close down the sky, when you shut out this hope ! Yet it shall be so.”

Philip paused a moment, and the silence was uninterrupted.

“ There was another feeling I had, upon which I have not insisted,” he continued. “ By my

brother's project, I am to reside almost wholly abroad. Even the little stipend I have to offer you now is absorbed of course by the investment of my property in his trading capital, and marriage, till I have partly enriched myself, would be even more hopeless than at present. Say the interval were five years—and five years of separation !”

“With happiness in prospect, it would soon pass, my dear Philip !”

“But is there nothing wasted in this time? My life is yours—the gift of love. Are not these coming five years the very flower of it !—a mutual loss, too, for are they not, even more emphatically, the very flower of yours? Eighteen and twenty-five are ages at which to marry, not ages to defer. During this time the entire flow of my existence is at its crowning fulness — passion, thought, joy, tenderness, susceptibility to beauty and sweetness—all I have that can be diminished or tarnished, or made dull by advancing age and contact with the world, is thrown away—for its spring and summer. Will the autumn of life repay us for this? Will it—even if we are rich and blest with health, and as capable of an unblemished union as now? Think of this a moment, dear Fanny !”

“I do—it is full of force and meaning, and, could we marry now, with a tolerable prospect of competency, it would be irresistible. But poverty in wedlock, Philip—”

“What do you call poverty? If we can suffice for each other, and have the necessaries of life, we

are not poor ! My art will bring us consideration enough—which is the main end of wealth, after all—and, of society, speaking for myself only, I want nothing. Luxuries for yourself, Fanny—means for your dear comfort and pleasure—you should not want if the world held them, and surely the unbounded devotion of one man to the support of the one woman he loves, *ought* to suffice for the task ! I am strong—I am capable of labor—I have limbs to toil, if my genius and my present means fail me, and, oh, Heaven ! you could not want !”

“No, no, no ! I thought not of want !” murmured Miss Bellairs, “I thought only—”

But she was not permitted to finish the sentence.

“Then my bright picture for the future *may* be realized !” exclaimed Philip, knitting his hands together in a transport of hope. “I may build up a reputation, with *you* for the constant partner of its triumphs and excitements ! I may go through the world, and have some care in life besides subsistence, how I shall sleep, and eat, and accumulate gold ; some companion, who, from the threshold of manhood, shared every thought—and knew every feeling—some pure and present angel who walked with me and purified my motives and ennobled my ambitions, and received from my lips and eyes, and from the beating of my heart against her own, all the love I had to give in a lifetime. Tell me, Fanny ! tell me, my sweet cousin ! is not this a picture of bliss, which, combined with suc-

cess in my noble art, might make a Paradise on earth for you and me?"

The hand of Fanny Bellairs rested on the upturned forehead of her lover as he sat at her feet in the deepening twilight, and she answered him with such sweet words as are linked together by spells known only to woman—but his palette and pencils were, nevertheless, burned in solemn holocaust that very night, and the lady carried her point, as ladies must. And, to the importation of silks from Lyons, was devoted, thenceforth, the genius of a Raphael—perhaps! Who knows?

The reader will naturally have gathered from this dialogue that Miss Fanny Bellairs had black eyes, and was rather below the middle stature. She was a belle, and it is only belle-metal of this particular description which is not fusible by "burning words." She had mind enough to appreciate fully the romance and enthusiasm of her cousin, Philip Ballister, and knew precisely the phenomena which a tall *blonde* (this complexion of woman being soluble in love and tears) would have exhibited under a similar experiment. While the fire of her love glowed, therefore, she opposed little resistance, and seemed softened and yielding, but her purpose remained unaltered, and she rang out "No!" the next morning, with a tone as little changed as a convent-bell from matins to vespers, though it has passed meantime through the furnace of an Italian noon.

Fanny was not a designing girl, either. She might have found a wealthier customer for her heart than her cousin Philip. And she loved this cousin as truly and well as her nature would admit, or as need be, indeed. But two things had conspired to give her the unmalleable quality just described—a natural disposition to confide, first and foremost, on all occasions, in her own sagacity, and a vivid impression made upon her mind by a childhood of poverty. At the age of twelve she had been transferred from the distressed fireside of her mother, Mrs. Bellairs, to the luxurious roof of her aunt, Mrs. Ballister, and, her mother dying soon after, the orphan girl was adopted, and treated as a child ; but the memory of the troubled hearth at which she had first learned to observe and reason, colored all the purposes and affections, thoughts, impulses, and wishes of the ripening girl, and to think of happiness in any proximity to privation seemed to her impossible, even though it were in the bosom of love. Seeing no reason to give her cousin credit for any knowledge of the world beyond his own experience, she decided to think for him as well as love him, and, not being so much pressed as the enthusiastic painter by the "*besoin d'aimer et de se faire aimer*," she very composedly prefixed, to the possession of her hand, the trifling achievement of getting rich—quite sure that if he knew as much as she, he would willingly run that race without the incumbrance of matrimony.

The death of Mr. Ballister, senior, had left the widow and her two boys more slenderly provided for than was anticipated — Phil's portion, after leaving college, producing the moderate income before mentioned. The elder brother had embarked in his father's business, and it was thought best on all hands for the younger Ballister to follow his example. But Philip, whose college leisure had been devoted to poetry and painting, and whose genius for the latter, certainly, was very decided, brought down his habits by a resolute economy to the limits of his income, and took up the pencil for a profession. With passionate enthusiasm, great purity of character, distaste for all society not in harmony with his favorite pursuit, and an industry very much concentrated and rendered effective by abstemious habits, Philip Ballister was very likely to develop what genius might lie between his head and hand, and his progress in the first year had been allowed, by eminent artists, to give very unusual promise. The Ballisters were still together, under the maternal roof, and the painter's studies were the portraits of the family, and Fanny's picture, of course, much the most difficult to finish. It would be very hard if a painter's portrait of his liege mistress, the lady of his heart, were not a good picture, and Fanny Bellairs on canvas was divine accordingly. If the copy had more softness of expression than the original (as it was thought to have), it only proves that wise men have for some time suspected,

that love is more dumb than blind, and the faults of our faultless idols are noted, however unconsciously. Neither thumb-screws nor hot coals—nothing probably but repentance after matrimony—would have drawn from Philip Ballister, in words, the same correction of his mistress's foible that had oozed out through his treacherous pencil !

Cupid is often drawn as a stranger pleading to be "taken in," but it is a miracle that he is not invariably drawn as a portrait-painter. A bird tied to the muzzle of a gun—an enemy who has written a book—an Indian prince under the protection of Giovanni Bulletto (Tuscan for John Bull),—is not more close upon demolition, one would think, than the heart of a lady delivered over to a painter's eyes, posed, draped, and lighted with the one object of studying her beauty. If there be any magnetism in isolated attention, any in steadfast gazing, any in passes of the hand hither and thither—if there be any magic in *ce doux demi-jour* so loved in France, in stuff for flattery ready pointed and feathered, in freedom of admiration, "and all in the way of business"—then is a lovable sitter to a love-like painter in "parlous" vicinity (as the new school would phrase it) to sweet heart-land ! Pleasure in a vocation has no offset in political economy as honor has ("the more honor the less profit"), or portrait-painters would be poorer than poets.

And, *malgré* his consciousness of the quality which required softening in his cousin's beauty,

and *malgré* his rare advantages for obtaining over her a lover's proper ascendancy, Mr. Philip Ballister bowed to the stronger will of Miss Fanny Bellairs, and sailed for France on his apprenticeship to Mammon.

The reader will please to advance five years. Before proceeding thence with our story, however, let us take a Parthian glance at the overstepped interval. Philip Ballister had left New York with the triple vow that he would enslave every faculty of his mind and body to business, that he would not return till he had made a fortune, and that such interstices as might occur in the building up of this chateau for felicity should be filled with sweet reveries about Fanny Bellairs. The forsworn painter had genius, as we have before hinted, and genius is (as much as it is any one thing) the power of concentration. He entered upon his duties, accordingly with a force and patience of application which soon made him master of what are called business habits, and, once in possession of the details, his natural cleverness gave him a speedy insight to all the scope and tactics of his particular field of trade. Under his guidance, the affairs of the house were soon in a much more prosperous train, and, after a year's residence at Lyons, Philip saw his way very clear to manage them with a long arm and take up his quarters in Paris. "*Les faits sont les seuls hommes qui aient soin*

d'eux mêmes," says a French novelist, but there is a period, early or late, in the lives of the cleverest men, when they become suddenly curious as to their capacity for the graces. Paris, to a stranger who does not visit in the Faubourg St. Germain, is a republic of personal exterior, where the degree of privilege depends, with Utopian impartiality, on the style of the outer man ; and Paris, therefore, if he is not already a Bachelor of Arts (qu ?—*beau's Arts*), usually serves the traveller as an Alma Mater of the poms and vanities.

Phil. Ballister, up to the time of his matriculation in *Chaussée d'Antin*, was a romantic-looking sloven. From this to a very dashing coxcomb is but half a step, and, to be rid of the coxcombrery and retain a look of fashion, is still within the easy limits of imitation. But—to obtain superiority of presence, with no apparent aid from dress and no describable manner, and to display, at the same time, every natural advantage in effective relief, and, withal, to adapt this subtle philtre, not only to the approbation of the critical and censorious, but to the taste of fair women gifted with judgment as God pleases—this is a finish not born with any man (though unsuccessful if it do not seem to be), and never reached in the apprenticeship of life, and never reached at all by men not much above their fellows. He who has it, has "bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior everywhere," for he must know, as a chart of quicksands, the

pronounced models of other nations ; but to be a "picked man of countries," and to *have been* a coxcomb and a man of fashion, are, as a painter would say, but the setting of the palette toward the making of the *chef-d'œuvre*.

Business prospered, and the facilities of leisure increased, while Ballister passed through these transitions of taste, and he found intervals to travel, and time to read, and opportunity to indulge, as far as he could with the eye only, his passion for knowledge in the arts. To all that appertained to the refinement of himself, he applied the fine feelers of a delicate and passionate construction, physical and mental, and, as the reader will already have included, wasted on culture comparatively unprofitable, faculties that would have been better employed but for the meddling of Miss Fanny Bellairs.

Ballister's return from France was heralded by the arrival of statuary and pictures, books, furniture, and numberless articles of tasteful and costly luxury. The reception of these by the family at home threw rather a new light on the probable changes in the long-absent brother, for, from the signal success of the business he had managed, they had very naturally supposed that it was the result only of unremitted and plodding care. Vague rumors of changes in his personal appearance had reached them, such as might be expected from con-

formity to foreign fashions, but those who had seen Philip Ballister in France, and called subsequently on the family in New York, were not people qualified to judge of the man, either from their own powers of observation or from any confidence he was likely to put forward while in their society. His letters had been delightful, but they were confined to third-person topics, descriptions of things likely to interest them, etc., and Fanny had few addressed personally to herself, having thought it worth while, for the experiment sake, or for some other reason, to see whether love would subsist without its usual *pabulum* of tender correspondence, and a *veto* on love-letters having served her for a parting injunction at Phil's embarkation for Havre. However varied by their different fancies, the transformation looked for by the whole family was substantially the same—the romantic artist sobered down to a practical, plain man of business. And Fanny herself had an occasional misgiving as to her relish for his counting-house virtues and manners ; though, on the detection of the feeling, she immediately closed her eyes upon it, and drummed up her delinquent constancy for “parade and inspection.”

All bustles are very much alike (we use the word as defined in Johnson), and the reader will appreciate our delicacy, besides, in not intruding on the first reunion of relatives and lovers long separated.

The morning after Philip Ballister's arrival, the family sat long at breakfast. The mother's gaze

fastened untiringly on the features of her son—still her boy—prying into them with a vain effort to reconcile the face of the man with the cherished picture of the child with sunny locks, and noting little else than the work of inward change upon the countenance and expression. The brother, with the predominant feeling of respect for the intelligence and industry of one who had made the fortunes of the house, read only subdued sagacity in the perfect simplicity of his whole exterior. And Fanny—Fanny was puzzled. The *bourgeoisie* and ledger-bred hardness of manner which she had looked for were not there, nor any variety of the “foreign slip-slop” common to travelled youth, nor any superciliousness, nor (faith!) any wear and tear of youth and good looks—nothing that she expected — nothing ! Not even a French guard-chain !

What there *was* in her cousin’s manners and exterior, however, was much more difficult to define by Miss Bellairs than what there *was not*. She began the renewal of their intercourse with very high spirits, herself—the simple nature and unpretendingness of his address awakening only an unembarrassed pleasure at seeing him again—but she soon began to suspect there was an exquisite refinement in this very simplicity, and to wonder “at the trick of it ;” and, after the first day passed in his society, her heart beat when he spoke to her, as it did not use to beat when she was sitting to him for her picture, and listening to

his passionate love-making. And, with all her faculties, she studied him. What was the charm of his presence? He was himself, and himself only. He seemed perfect, but he seemed to have arrived at perfection like a statue, not like a picture—by what had been taken away, not by what had been laid on. He was as natural as a bird, and as graceful and unembarrassed. He neither forced conversation, nor pressed the little attentions of the drawing-room, and his attitudes were full of repose; yet she was completely absorbed in what he said, and she had been impressed imperceptibly with his high-bred politeness, and the singular elegance of his person. Fanny felt there was a change in her relative position to her cousin. In what it consisted, or which had the advantage, she was perplexed to discover—but she bit her lips as she caught herself thinking that if she were not engaged to marry Philip Ballister, she should suspect that she had just fallen irrecoverably in love with him.

It would have been a novelty in the history of Miss Bellairs that any event to which she had once consented, should admit of reconsideration; and the Ballister family, used to her strong will, were confirmed fatalists as to the coming about of her ends and aims. Her marriage with Philip, therefore, was discussed, *cœur ouvert*, from his first arrival, and, indeed, in her usual fashion of saving others the trouble of making up their minds, “herself had named the day.” This, it is true, was

before his landing, and was, then, an effort of considerable magnanimity, as the expectant Penelope was not yet advised of her lover's state of preservation or damages by cares and keeping. If Philip had not found his wedding-day fixed on his arrival, however, he probably would have had a voice in the naming of it, for, with Fanny's new inspirations as to his character, there had grown up a new flower in her garden of beauties—timidity ! What bird of the air had sown the seed in such a soil was a problem to herself—but true it was !—the confident belle had grown a blushing trembler ! She would as soon have thought of bespeaking her wings for the sky, as to have ventured on naming the day in a short week after.

The day *was* named, however, and the preparations went on—*nem. con.*—the person most interested (after herself) accepting every congratulation and allusion, touching the event, with the most impenetrable suavity. The marbles and pictures, upholstery and services, were delivered over to the order of Miss Bellairs, and Philip, disposed, apparently, to be very much a recluse in his rooms, or, at other times, engrossed by troops of welcoming friends, saw much less of his bride elect than suited her wishes, and saw her seldom alone. By particular request, also, he took no part in the plenishing and embellishing of the new abode—not permitted even to inquire where it was situated ; and, under this cover, besides the pleasure of having her own way, Fanny concealed a little secret, which, when

disclosed, she now felt, would figure forth Philip's comprehension, her whole scheme of future happiness. She had taken the elder brother into her counsels a fortnight after Philip's return, and, with his aid and consent, had abandoned the original idea of a house in town, purchased a beautifully-secluded estate and *cottage ornée*, on the East River, and transferred thither all the objects of art, furniture, etc. One room only of the maternal mansion was permitted to contribute its quota to the completion of the bridal dwelling—the wing, never since inhabited, in which Philip had made his essay as a painter—and, without variation of a cobweb, and, with whimsical care and effort on the part of Miss Fanny, this apartment was reproduced at Revedere—her own picture on the easel, as it stood on the night of his abandonment of his art, and palette, pencils and colors in tempting readiness on the table. Even the fire-grate of the old studio had been re-set in the new, and the cottage throughout had been refitted with a view to occupation in the winter. And to sundry hints on the part of the elder brother, that some thought should be given to a city residence—for the Christmas holidays at least—Fanny replied, through a blush, that she would never wish to see the town—with Philip at Revedere !

Five years had ripened and mellowed the beauty of Fanny Bellairs, and the same summer-time of youth had turned into fruit the feeling left by Philip in bud and flower. She was ready now for

love. She had felt the variable temper of society, and there was a presentiment in the heart, of receding flatteries and the winter of life. It was with mournful self-reproach that she thought of the years wasted in separation, of her own choosing, from the man she loved ; and, with the power to recall time, she would have thanked God with tears of joy for the privilege of retracing the chain of life to that link of parting. Not worth a day of those lost years, she bitterly confessed to herself, was the wealth they had purchased.

It lacked as little as one week of "the happy day," when the workmen were withdrawn from Revedere, and the preparations for a family breakfast, to be succeeded by the agreeable surprise to Philip of informing him he was at home, were finally completed. One or two very intimate friends were added to the party, and the invitations (from the elder Ballister) proposed simply a *déjeuner sur l'herbe* in the grounds of an unoccupied villa, the property of an acquaintance.

With the subsiding of the excitement of return, the early associations which had temporarily confused and colored the feelings of Philip Ballister settled gradually away, leaving uppermost once more the fastidious refinement of the Parisian. Through this medium, thin and cold, the bubbles from the breathing of the heart of youth, rose rarely and reluctantly. The Ballisters held a good station in society, without caring for much beyond the easy conveniences of life, and Fanny, though

capable of any degree of elegance, had not seen the expediency of raising the tone of her manners above that of her immediate friends. Without being positively distasteful to Philip, the family circle, Fanny included, left him much to desire in the way of society, and, unwilling to abate the warmth of his attentions while with them, he had latterly pleaded occupation more frequently, and passed his time in the more congenial company of his library of art. This was the less noticed that it gave Miss Bellairs the opportunity to make frequent visits to the workmen at Revedere, and, in the polished devotion of her betrothed when with her, Fanny saw nothing reflected but her own daily increasing tenderness and admiration.

The morning of the *fête* came in like the air in an overture—a harmony of all the instruments of summer. The party were at the gate of Revedere by ten, and the drive through the avenue to the lawn drew a burst of delighted admiration from all. The place was exquisite, and seen in its glory, and Fanny's heart was brimming with gratified pride and exultation. She assumed at once the dispensation of the honors, and beautiful she looked with her snowy dress and raven ringlets flitting across the lawn, and queening it like Perdita among the flowers. Having narrowly escaped bursting into tears of joy when Philip pronounced the place prettier than anything he had seen in his travels, she was, for the rest of the day, calmly happy ; and, with the grateful shade, the

delicious breakfast in the grove, the rambling and boating on the river, the hours passed off like dreams, and no one even hinted a regret that the house itself was under lock and bar. And so the sun set, and the twilight came on, and the guests were permitted to order round their carriages and depart, the Ballisters accompanying them to the gate. And, on the return of the family through the avenue, excuses were made for idling hither and thither, till light began to show through the trees, and, by the time of their arrival at the lawn, the low windows of the cottage poured forth streams of light, and the open doors, and servants busy within, completed a scene more like magic than reality. Philip was led in by the excited girl who was the fairy of the spell, and his astonishment at the discovery of his statuary and pictures, books and furniture, arranged in complete order within, was fed upon with the passionate delight of love in authority.

When an hour had been spent in examining and admiring the different apartments, an inner room was thrown open, in which supper was prepared, and this fourth act in the day's drama was lingered over in untiring happiness by the family.

Mrs. Ballister, the mother, rose and retired, and Philip pleaded indisposition, and begged to be shown to the room allotted to him. This was ring-ing-up the curtain for the last act sooner than had been planned by Fanny, but she announced herself as his chamberlain, and, with her hands affection-

ately crossed on his arm, led him to a suite of rooms in a wing still unvisited, and, with a good-night kiss, left him at the open door of the revived studio, furnished for the night with a bachelor's bed. Turning upon the threshold, he closed the door with a parting wish of sweet dreams, and Fanny, after listening a moment with a vain hope of overhearing some expression of pleasure, and lingering again on her way back, to be overtaken by her surprised lover, sought her own bed without rejoining the circle, and passed a sleepless and happy night of tears and joy.

Breakfast was served the next morning on a terrace overlooking the river, and it was voted by acclamation that Fanny never before looked so lovely. As none but the family were to be present, she had stolen a march on her marriage wardrobe, and added to her demi-toilet a morning cap of exquisite becomingness. Altogether she looked deliciously wife-like, and did the honors of the breakfast-table with a grace and sweetness that warmed out love and compliments even from the sober soil of household intimacy. Philip had not yet made his appearance, and they lingered long at table, till at last, a suggestion that he might be ill started Fanny to her feet, and she ran to his door before a servant could be summoned.

The rooms were open, and the bed had not been occupied. The candle was burned to the socket, and on the easel, resting against the picture, was a letter addressed—"Miss Fanny Bellairs."

THE LETTER.

“ I have followed up to this hour, my fair cousin, in the path you have marked out for me. It has brought me back, in this chamber, to the point from which I started under your guidance, and if it had brought me back unchanged — if it restored me my energy, my hope, and my prospect of fame, I should pray Heaven that it would also give me back my love, and be content—more than content, if it gave me back also my poverty. The sight of my easel, and of the surroundings of my boyish dreams of glory, have made my heart bitter. They have given form and voice to a vague unhappiness, which has haunted me through all these absent years—years of degrading pursuits and wasted powers—and it now impels me from you, kind and lovely as you are, with an aversion I cannot control. I cannot forgive you. You have thwarted my destiny. You have extinguished with sordid cares a lamp within me, that might, by this time, have shone through the world. And what am I, since your wishes are accomplished? Enriched in pocket, and bankrupt in happiness and self-respect.

“ With a heart sick, and a brain aching for distinction, I have come to an unhonored stand-still at thirty ! I am a successful tradesman, and in this character I shall probably die. Could I begin to be a painter now, say you ? Alas ! my knowl-

edge of the art is too great for patience with the slow hand ! I could not draw a line without despair. The pliant fingers and the plastic mind must keep pace to make progress in art. My taste is fixed, and my imagination uncreative, because chained down by certainties ; and the shortsighted ardor and daring experiments which are indispensable to sustain and advance the follower in Raphael's footsteps, are too far behind for my resuming. The tide ebbed from me at the accursed burning of my pencils by your pitiless hand, and from that hour I have felt hope receding. Could I be happy with you, stranded here in ignoble idleness, and owing to you the loss of my whole venture of opportunity ? No, Fanny ?—surely no !

“ I would not be unnecessarily harsh. I am sensible of your affection and constancy. I have deferred this explanation unwisely, till the time and place make it seem more cruel. You are at this very moment, I well know, awake in your chamber, devoting to me the vigils of a heart overflowing with tenderness. And I would—if it were possible—if it were not utterly beyond my powers of self-sacrifice and concealment—I would affect a devotion I cannot feel, and carry out this error through a life of artifice and monotony. But here, again, the work is your own, and my feelings revert bitterly to your interference. If there were no other obstacle to my marrying you—if you were not associated repulsively with the dark cloud on my life, you are not the woman I could now en-

throne in my bosom. We have diverged since the separation which I pleaded against, and which you commanded. I need for my idolatry, now, a creature to whom the sordid cares you have sacrificed me to, are utterly unknown—a woman born and educated in circumstances where want is never feared, and where calculation never enters. I must lavish my wealth, if I fulfil my desire, on one who accepts it like the air she breathes, and who knows the value of nothing but love—a bird with a human soul and form, believing herself free of all the world is rich in, and careful only for pleasure and the happiness of those who belong to her. Such women, beautiful and highly educated, are found only in ranks of society between which and my own I have been increasing in distance—nay, building an impassable barrier, in obedience to your control. Where I stop, interdicted by the stain of trade, the successful artist is free to enter. You have stamped me *plebeian*—you would not share my slow progress toward a higher sphere, and you have disqualified me for attaining it alone. In your mercenary and immovable will, and in that only, lies the secret of our twofold unhappiness.

“I leave you, to return to Europe. My brother and my friends will tell you I am mad and inexcusable, and look upon you as a victim. They will say that, to have been a painter, were nothing to the career that I might mark out for my ambition, if ambition I must have, in politics. Politics in a

country where distinction is a pillory ! But I could not live here. It is my misfortune that my tastes are so modified by that long and compulsory exile, that life, here, would be a perpetual penance. This unmixed air of merchandise suffocates me. Our own home is tintured black with it. You yourself, in this rural Paradise you have conjured up, move in it like a cloud. The counting-house rings in your voice, calculation draws together your brows, you look on everything as a *means*, and know its cost ; and the calm and means-forgetting *fruition*, which forms the charm and dignity of superior life, is utterly unknown to you. What would be my happiness with such a wife ? What would be yours with such a husband ? Yet I consider the incompatibility between us as no advantage on my part—on the contrary, a punishment, and of your inflicting. What shall I be, anywhere, but a Tantalus — a fastidious *ennuyé*, with a thirst for the inaccessible burning in my bosom continually !

“ I pray you let us avoid another meeting before my departure. Though I cannot forgive you as a lover, I can think of you with pleasure as a cousin, and I give you as your due (‘ damages,’ the law would phrase it,) the portion of myself which you thought most important when I offered you my all. You would not take me without the fortune, but perhaps you will be content with the fortune without me. I shall immediately take steps to

convey to you this property of Revedere, with an income sufficient to maintain it, and I trust soon to hear that you have found a husband better worthy of you than your cousin—

“PHILIP BALLISTER.”

FRIEND BARTON'S CONCERN.

BY MARY HALLOCK FOOTE.

IT had been "borne in" upon him, more or less, during the long winter; it had not relaxed its hold when the frosts unlocked and the streams were set free from their long winter's silence among the hills. He grew restless and abstracted under "the turnings of the Lord's hand upon him," and his speech unconsciously shaped itself into the Biblical cadences which came to him in his moments of spiritual exercise.

The bedrabbled snows of March shrank away before the keen, quickening sunbeams; the hills emerged, brown and sodden, like the chrysalis of the new year. The streams woke in a tumult, and all day and night their voices called from the hills back of the mill. The waste-weir was a foaming torrent, and spread itself in muddy shallows across the meadow beyond the old garden where the rob-

ins and blue birds were house-hunting. Friend Barton's trouble stirred with the life-blood of the year, and pressed upon him sorely ; but as yet he gave it no words. He plodded about among his lean kine, tempering the winds of March to his untimely lambs, and reconciling unnatural ewes to their maternal duties.

Friend Barton had never heard of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest ; though it was the spring of 1812, and England and America were investigating the subject on the seas, while the nations of Europe were practically illustrating it. The "hospital tent," as the boys called an old corn-basket, covered with carpet, which stood beside the kitchen chimney, was seldom without an occupant,—a brood of chilled chickens, a weakly lamb, or a wee pig (with too much blue in its pinkness), which had been left behind by its stouter brethren in the race for existence. The old mill hummed away through the day, and often late in the evening if time pressed, upon the grists which added a thin, intermittent stream of tribute to the family income. Whenever work was "slack," Friend Barton was sawing or chopping in the wood-shed adjoining the kitchen ; every moment he could seize or make he was there, stooping over the rapidly growing pile.

"Seems to me, father, thee's in a great hurry with the wood this spring. I don't know when we've had such a pile ahead."

"'Twon't burn up any faster for being chopped,"

Friend Barton said ; and then his wife Rachel knew that if he had a reason for being "forehanded" with the wood, he was not ready to give it.

One rainy April afternoon, when the smoky gray distances began to take a tinge of green, and through the drip and rustle of the rain the call of the robins sounded, Friend Barton sat in the door of the barn, oiling the road-harness. The old chaise had been wheeled out and greased, and its cushions beaten and dusted.

An ox-team with a load of grain creaked up the hill and stopped at the mill door. The driver, seeing Friend Barton's broad-brimmed drab felt hat against the dark interior of the barn, came down the short lane leading from the mill past the house and farm-buildings.

"Fixin' up for travellin', Uncle Tommy?"

Vain compliments were unacceptable to Thomas Barton, and he was generally known and addressed as "Uncle Tommy" by the world's people of a younger generation.

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps, neighbor Gordon. I am getting myself in readiness to obey the Lord, whichever way He calls me."

Farmer Gordon cast a shrewd eye over the premises. They wore that patient, sad, exhumed look which old farm-buildings are apt to have in early spring. The roofs were black with rain, and brightened with patches of green moss. Farmer Gordon instinctively calculated how many

"bunches o' shingle" would be required to rescue them from the decline into which they had fallen, in spite of the hectic green spots.

"Wal, the Lord calls most of us to stay at home and look after things, such weather as this. Good plantin' weather; good weather for breakin' ground; fust-rate weather for millin'! This is a reg'lar miller's rain, Uncle Tommy. You ought to be takin' advantage of it. I've got a grist back here; wish ye could manage to let me have it when I come back from store."

The grist was ground and delivered before Friend Barton went in to his supper that night. Dorothy Barton had been mixing bread, and was wiping her white arms and hands on the roller towel by the kitchen door, as her father stamped and scraped his feet on the stones outside.

"I do believe I forgot to toll neighbor Gordon's rye," he said, as he gave a final rub on the broom Dorothy handed out to him. "It's wonderful how careless I get!"

"Well, father, I don't suppose thee'd ever forget, and toll a grist twice!"

"I believe I've been mostly preserved from mistakes of that kind," said Friend Barton gently. "It may have been the Lord who stayed my hand from gathering profit unto myself while his lambs go unfed."

Dorothy put her hands on her father's shoulders. She was almost as tall as he, and could look into his patient, troubled eyes.

"Father, I know what thee is thinking of ; but do think *long*. It will be a hard year ; the boys *ought* to go to school ; and mother is so feeble."

Friend Barton's "concern" kept him awake long that night. His wife watched by his side, giving no sign, lest her wakeful presence should disturb his silent wrestlings. The tall, cherry-wood clock in the entry measured the hours as they passed with its slow, dispassionate tick.

At two o'clock Rachel Barton was awakened from her first sleep of weariness by her husband's voice whispering heavily in the darkness.

"My way is hedged up ! I see no way to go forward. Lord, strengthen my patience, that I murmur not, after all I have seen of Thy goodness. I find daily bread is very desirable ; want and necessity are painful to nature ; but shall I follow Thee for the sake of the loaves, or will it do to forsake Thee in times of emptiness and abasement ?"

There was silence again, and restless tossings and sighings continued the struggle.

"Thomas," the wife's voice spoke tremulously in the darkness, "my dear husband, I know where thy thoughts are tending. If the Spirit is with thee, do not deny it for our sakes, I pray thee. The Lord did not give thee thy wife and children to hang as a millstone round thy neck. I am thy helpmeet, to strengthen thee in his service. I am thankful that I have my health this spring better than usual, and Dorothy is a wonderful help. Her spirit was sent to sustain me in thy long absences.

Go, dear, and serve our Master, who has called thee in these bitter strivings ! Dorothy and I will keep things together as well as we can. The way will open—never fear !” She put out her hand and touched his face in the darkness ; there were tears on the furrowed cheeks. “ Try to sleep, dear, and let thy spirit have rest. There is but one answer to this call.”

With the first drowsy twitterings of the birds, when the crescent-shaped openings in the board shutters began to define themselves clearly in the shadowy room, they arose and went about their morning tasks in silence. Friend Barton’s step was a little heavier than usual, and the hollows round his wife’s pale brown eyes were a little deeper. As he sat on the splint-bottomed chair by the kitchen fireplace, drawing on his boots, she laid her hands on his shoulders, and her cheek on the worn spot on the top of his head.

“ Thee will lay this concern before meeting to-morrow, father ?”

“ I had it on my mind to do so,—if my light be not quenched before then.”

Friend Barton’s light was not quenched. Words came to him without seeking, in which to “ open the concern which had ripened in his mind,” of a religious visit to the meeting constituting the yearly meetings of Philadelphia and Baltimore. A “ minute” was given him encouraging him in the name of, and with the full concurrence of, the monthly meetings of Nine Partners, and Stony

Valley, to go wherever the Truth might lead him. While Friend Barton was thus freshly anointed, and "abundantly encouraged," his wife, Rachel, was talking with Dorothy in the low upper chamber, known as the "wheel-room."

Dorothy was spinning wool on the big wheel, dressed in her light calico short-gown and brown quilted petticoat; her arms were bare, and her hair was gathered away from her flushed cheeks and knotted behind her ears. The roof sloped down on one side, and the light came from a long low window under the eaves. There was another window (shaped like a half moon high up in the peak), but it sent down only one long beam of sunlight, which glimmered across the dust and fell upon Dorothy's white neck.

The wheel was humming a quick measure, and Dorothy trod lightly back and forth, the wheel-pin in one hand, the other upraised holding the tense, lengthening thread, which the spindle devoured again.

"Dorothy, thee looks warm:—can't thee sit down a moment, while I talk to thee?"

"Is it anything important, mother? I want to get my twenty knots before dinner." She paused as she joined a long tress of wool at the spindle.

"Is it anything about father?"

"Yes, it's about father, and all of us."

"I know," said Dorothy, stretching herself back with a sigh. "He's going away again!"

"Yes, dear. He feels that he is called. It is a

time of trouble and contention everywhere,—‘ the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.’ ”

“ There are not so *many* ‘ laborers ’ *here*, mother, though to be sure, the harvest—”

“ Dorothy, my daughter ! don’t let a spirit of levity creep into thy speech. Thy father has striven and wrestled with his urgings. I’ve seen it working on him all winter ; he feels now it is the Lord’s will.”

“ I don’t see how he can be so sure,” said Dorothy, swaying gloomily to and fro against the wheel. “ I don’t care for myself,—I’m not afraid of work,—but *thee’s* not able to do what *thee* does *now*, mother. If I have outside things to look after, how can I help thee as I should ? The boys are about as much dependence as a flock of barn swallows !”

“ Don’t fret about me, dear ; the way will open. Thy father has thought and planned for us ; have patience while I tell thee. Thee knows Walter Evesham’s pond is small and his mill is doing a thriving business ?”

“ Yes, I know it !” Dorothy exclaimed. “ He has his own share, and ours too—most of it !”

“ Wait, dear, wait ! Thy father has rented him the ponds to use when his own gives out. He is to have the control of the water, and it will give us a little income, even though the old mill does stand idle.”

“ He may as well take the mill, too. If father is

away all summer it will be useless ever to start it again. Thee'll see, mother, how it will end if Walter Evesham has the custom and the water all summer. I think it's miserable for a young man to be so keen about money."

"Dorothy, seems to me thee's hasty in thy judgments. I never heard that said of Walter Evesham. His father left him with capital to improve his mill. It does better work than ours; we can't complain of that. Thy father was never one to study much after ways of making money. He felt he had no right to more than an honest livelihood. I don't say that Walter Evesham's in the wrong. We know that Joseph took advantage of his opportunities, though I can't say that I ever felt much unity with some of his transactions. What would thee have, my dear? Thee's discouraged with thy father for choosing the thorny way, which we tread with him; but thee seems no better satisfied with one who considers the flesh and its wants!"

"I don't *know*, mother, *what* I want for myself. It doesn't matter, but for thee I would have rest from all these cruel worries thee has borne so long."

She buried her face in her mother's lap and put her strong young arms about the frail, toil-bent form.

"There, there, dear. Try to rule thy spirit, Dorothy. Thee's too much worked up about this. They are not worries to me. I am thankful we have nothing to decide, one way or the other—only

to do our best with what is given us. Thee's not thyself, dear. Go down-stairs and fetch in the clothes, and don't hurry; stay out till thee gets more composed."

Dorothy did not succeed in bringing herself into unity with her father's call, but she came to a fuller realization of his struggle. When he bade them good-by, his face showed what it had cost him, but Rachel was calm and cheerful. The pain of parting is keenest to those who go, but it stays longer with those who are left behind.

"Dorothy, take good care of thy mother!" Friend Barton said, taking his daughter's face between his hands and gravely kissing her brow between the low-parted ripples of her hair.

"Yes, father," she said, looking into his eyes. "Thee knows I'm thy eldest son."

They watched the old chaise swing round the corner of the lane, then the pollard willows shut it from sight.

"Come, mother," said Dorothy, hurrying her in at the gate. "I'm going to make a great pot of mush, and have it hot for supper, and fried for breakfast, and warmed up with molasses for dinner, and there'll be some cold with milk for supper, and we shan't have any cooking to do at all."

They went round to the kitchen door. Rachel stopped in the wood-shed, and the tears rushed to her eyes.

"Dear father! How he has worked over that wood, early and late, to spare us!"

We will not revive Dorothy's struggles with the farm-work and with the boys. They were an isolated family at the mill-house ; their peculiar faith isolated them still more, and they were twelve miles from meeting and the settlement of Friends at Stony Valley. Dorothy's pride kept her silent about her needs, lest they might bring reproach upon her father among the neighbors, who would not be likely to feel the urgency of his spiritual summons.

The summer heats came on apace and the nights grew shorter. It seemed to Dorothy that she had hardly stretched out her tired young body and forgotten her cares in the low attic bedroom, before the east was streaked with light and the birds were singing in the apple-trees, whose falling blossoms drifted in at the window.

One day in early June, Friend Barton's flock of sheep—consisting of nine experienced ewes, six yearlings, and a sprinkling of close-curved lambs whose legs had not yet come into mature relations with their bodies—were gathered in a little railed inclosure, beside the stream which flowed into the "mill-head." It was supplied by the waste from the pond, and when the gate was shut, rambled easily over the gray slate pebbles, with here and there a fall, just forcible enough to serve as a douche bath for a well-grown sheep. The victims were panting in their heavy fleeces, and their hoarse, plaintive tremolo mingled with the ripple of the water and the sound of young voices in a

frolic. Dorothy had divided her forces for the washing to the best advantage. The two elder boys stood in the stream to receive the sheep, which she, with the help of little Jimmy, caught and dragged to the bank.

The boys were at work now upon an elderly ewe, while Dorothy stood on the brink of the stream, braced against an ash sapling, dragging at the fleece of a beautiful but reluctant yearling. Her bare feet were incased in a pair of moccasins which laced around the ankle ; her petticoats were kilted, and her broad hat bound down with a ribbon ; one sleeve was rolled up, the other had been sacrificed in a scuffle in the sheep-pen. The new candidate for immersion stood bleating and trembling, with her fore feet planted against the slippery bank, pushing back with all her strength, while Jimmy propelled from the rear.

"Boys !" Dorothy's clear voice called across the stream. "*Do* hurry ! She's been in long enough, now ! Keep her head up, can't you, and squeeze the wool *hard* ! You're not *half* washing ! Oh, Reuby ! thee'll drown her ! Keep her *head* up !"

Another unlucky douse and another half-smothered bleat,—Dorothy released the yearling and plunged to the rescue. "Go after that lamb, Reuby !" she cried, with exasperation in her voice. Reuby followed the yearling, which had disappeared over the orchard slope, upsetting an obstacle in its path, which happened to be Jimmy. He was

now wailing on the bank, while Dorothy, with the ewe's nose tucked comfortably in the bend of her arm, was parting and squeezing the fleece, with the water swirling round her. Her stout arms ached, and her ears were stunned with the incessant bleating ; she counted with dismay the sheep still waiting in the pen. " Oh, Jimmy ! *do* stop crying, or else go to the house ! "

" He'd better go after Reuby," said Sheppard Barton, who was now Dorothy's sole dependence.

" Oh yes ; do, Jimmy, that's a good boy. Tell him to let the yearling go, and come back quick."

The water had run low that morning in Eve-sham's pond. He shut down the mill, and strode up the hills, across lots, to raise the gate of the lower Barton Pond, which had been heading up for his use. He passed the corn-field where, a month before, he had seen pretty Dorothy Barton dropping corn with her brothers. It made him ache to think of Dorothy, with her feeble mother, the boys, as wild as preacher's sons proverbially are, and the old farm running down on her hands ; the fences all needed mending, and there went Reuben Barton, now, careering over the fields in chase of a stray yearling. His mother's house was big, and lonely, and empty ; and he flushed as he thought of the " one ewe-lamb " he coveted, out of Friend Barton's rugged pastures. As he raised the gate, and leaned to watch the water swirl and gurgle through the " trunk," sucking the long weeds with it, and thickening with its tumult the clear current

of the stream, the sound of voices and bleating of sheep came up from below. He had not the farming instincts in his blood ;—the distant bleating, the hot June sunshine and cloudless sky, did not suggest to him sheep-washing ;—but now came a boy's voice shouting and a cry of distress, and he remembered, with a thrill, that Friend Barton used the stream for that peaceful purpose. He shut down the gate and tore along through the ferns and tangled grass till he came to the sheep-pen, where the bank was muddy and trampled. The prisoners were bleating drearily and looking with longing eyes across to the other side, where those who had suffered were now straying and cropping the short turf, through the lights and shadows of the orchard.

There was no other sign of life, except a broad hat with a brown ribbon, buffeted about in an eddy, among the stones. The stream dipped now below the hill, and the current, still racing fast with the impetus he had given it, shot away among the hazel thickets which crowded close to the brink. He was obliged to make a detour by the orchard, and come out at the " mill-head " below ;—a black, deep pool, with an ugly ripple setting across it to the " head-gate." He saw something white clinging there and ran round the brink. It was the sodden fleece of the old ewe which had been drifted against the " head-gate," and held there to her death. Evesham, with a sickening contraction of the heart, threw off his jacket for a plunge, when

Dorothy's voice called rather faintly from the willows on the opposite bank.

"Don't jump! I'm here," she said. Evesham searched the willows, and found her seated in the sun just beyond, half buried in a bed of ferns.

"I wouldn't have called thee," she said shyly, as he sank, pale and panting, beside her, "but thee looked—I thought thee was going to jump into the mill-head!"

"I thought *you* were there, Dorothy!"

"I was there quite long enough. Shep pulled me out; I was too tired to help myself much." Dorothy held her palm pressed against her temple, and the blood trickled from beneath, streaking her pale, wet cheek.

"He's gone to the house to get me a cloak. I don't want mother to see me—not yet," she said.

"I'm afraid you ought not to wait, Dorothy. Let me take you to the house, won't you? I'm afraid you'll get a deadly chill."

Dorothy did not look in the least like death. She was blushing now, because Evesham would think it so strange of her to stay, and yet she could not rise in her wet clothes, which clung to her like the calyx to a bud.

"Let me see that cut, Dorothy, *please!*"

"Oh, it's nothing. I don't *wish* thee to look at it!"

"But I will! Do you want to make me your murderer—sitting there in your wet clothes, with a cut on your head?"

He drew away her hand, and the wound, indeed, was no great affair, but he bound it up deftly with strips of his handkerchief. Dorothy's wet curls touched his fingers and clung to them, and her eyelashes drooped lower and lower.

"I think it was *very* stupid of thee. Didn't thee hear us from the dam? I'm sure we made noise enough."

"Yes, I heard you when it was too late. I heard the sheep before, but how could I imagine that *you*, Dorothy, and three boys, as big as cockerels, were sheep-washing? It's the most preposterous thing I ever heard of!"

"Well, I can't help being a woman, and the sheep had to be washed. I think there ought to be more men in the world when half of them are preaching and fighting."

"If you'd only let the men who are left help you a little, Dorothy!"

"I don't want any help. I only *don't* want to be washed into the mill-head."

They both laughed, and Evesham began again entreating her to let him take her to the house.

"Hasn't thee a coat or something I could put around me until Shep comes?" said Dorothy. "He must be here soon."

"Yes, I've got a jacket here somewhere."

He sped away to find it, and faithless Dorothy, as the willows closed between them, sprang to her feet and fled like a startled Naiad to the house.

When Evesham, pushing through the willows, saw nothing but the bed of wet, crushed ferns and the trail through the long grass where Dorothy's feet had fled, he smiled grimly to himself, remembering that "ewe-lambs" are not always as meek as they look.

That evening Rachel had received a letter from Friend Barton, and was preparing to read it aloud to the children. They were in the kitchen, where the boys had been helping Dorothy, in a desultory manner, to shell corn for the chickens; but now all was silence, while Rachel wiped her glasses and turned the large sheet of paper, squared with many foldings, to the candle.

She read the date, "London Grove, 5th month, 22nd.—Most affectionately beloved." "He means us all," said Rachel, turning to the children with a tender smile. "It's spelled with a small b."

"He means thee!" said Dorothy, laughing. "Thee's not such a very big beloved."

There was a moment's silence. "I don't know that the opening of the letter is of general interest," Rachel mused, with her eyes travelling slowly down the page. "He says: 'In regard to my health, lest thee should concern thyself, I am thankful to say I have never enjoyed better since years have made me acquainted with my infirmities of body, and I earnestly hope that my dear wife and children are enjoying the same blessing.'

"I trust the boys are not deficient in obedience and helpfulness. At Sheppard's age I had already

begun to take the duties of a man upon my shoulders.' "

Sheppard giggled uncomfortably, and Dorothy laughed outright.

" Oh ! if father only *knew* how good the boys are ! Mother, thee must write and tell him about their ' helpfulness and obedience ' ! Thee can tell him their appetites keep up pretty well ; they manage to take their meals regularly, and they are *always* out of bed by eight o'clock, to help me hang up the milking-stool ! "

" Just wait till thee gets in the mill-head again, Dorothy Barton ! Thee needn't come to *me* to help thee out ! "

" Go on, mother ! Don't let the boys interrupt thee ! "

" Well," said Rachel, rousing herself, " where was I ? Oh, ' when I was Sheppard's age ' : Well, next come some allusions to the places where he has visited, and his spiritual exercises there. I don't know that the boys are quite old enough to enter into this yet. Thee'd better read it thyself, Dorothy. I'm keeping all father's letters for the boys to read, when they are old enough to appreciate them. "

" Well, I think thee might read us about where he's been preachin' ! We can understand a great deal more than thee thinks we can ! " said Shep, in an injured voice. " Reuby, he can preach some himself ! Thee ought to hear him, mother. It's almost as good as meetin' ! "

"I wondered how Reuby spent his time!" said Dorothy, and the mother hastened to interpose.

"Well, here's a passage that may be interesting : 'On sixth day attended the youths' meeting here, —a pretty favored time on the whole. Joseph' [that's Joseph Carpenter ; he mentions him aways back] 'had good service in lively testimony, while I was calm and easy, without a word to say. At a meeting at Plumstead, we suffered long, but at length we felt relieved. The unfaithful were admonished, the youth invited, and the heavy-hearted encouraged. It was a heavenly time!' Heretofore he seems to have been closed up with silence a good deal ; but now the way opens continually for him to free himself. He's been 'much favored,' he says, 'of late.' Reuby, what's thee doing to thy brothers?" (Shep and Reuby, who had been persecuting Jimmy by pouring handfuls of corn down the neck of his jacket until he had taken refuge behind Dorothy's chair, were now recriminating with corn-cobs on each other's faces.) "Dorothy, can't thee keep those boys quiet?"

"Did thee ever know them to be quiet?" said Dorothy, helping Jimmy to relieve himself of his corn.

"Well now, listen!" Rachel continued placidly, "'Second day, 27th' (of fifth month, he means, the letter's been a *long time* coming), 'attended their mid-week meeting at London Grove, where my tongue as it were clave to the roof of my mouth, while Hannah Husbands was much favored, and

enabled to lift up her voice like the song of an angel' "—

"Who's Hannah Husbands?" cried Dorothy.

"Thee don't know her, dear. She was second cousin to thy father's step-mother; the families were not congenial, I believe; but she has a great gift for the ministry."

"I should think she'd better be at home with her children,—if she has any. Fancy *thee*, mother, going about to strange meetings, and lifting up thy voice."

"Hush! hush! Dorothy! Thy tongue's running away with thee. Consider the example thee's setting the boys."

"Thee'd better write to father about Dorothy, mother! Perhaps Hannah Husbands would like to know what she thinks about her preachin'!"

"Well now, be quiet, all of you. Here's something about Dorothy: 'I know that my dear daughter Dorothy is faithful and loving, albeit somewhat quick of speech, and restive under obligation. I would have thee remind her that an unwillingness to accept help from others argues a want of Christian Meekness. Entreat her, from me, not to conceal her needs from our neighbors, if so be she find her work oppressive. We know them to be of kindly intention, though not of our way of thinking in all particulars. Let her receive help from them, not as individuals, but as instruments of the Lord's protection, which it were impiety and ingratitude to deny.'"

"There!" cried Shep. "That means thee's to let Luke Jordan finish the sheep-washing. Thee'd better have done it in the first place. We wouldn't have the old ewe to pick if thee had!"

Dorothy was dimpling at the idea of Luke Jordan in the character of an instrument of heavenly protection. She had not regarded him in that light, it must be confessed, and had rejected him with scorn.

"He may if he wants to," she said; "but you boys shall drive them over. I'll have nothing to do with it."

"And shear them too, Dorothy? He asked to shear them long ago."

"Well, *let* him shear them, and keep the wool too."

"I wouldn't say that, Dorothy!" said Rachel Barton. "We need the wool, and it seems as if over-payment might not be quite honest either."

"Oh! mother, mother! What a mother thee is!" cried Dorothy laughing, and rumpling her cap-strings in a tumultuous embrace.

"She's a great deal too good for *thee*, Dorothy Barton."

"She's too good for all of us! How did thee ever come to have such a graceless set of children, mother?"

"I'm very well satisfied," said Rachel. "But now do be quiet, and let's finish the letter. We must get to bed some time to-night!"

The wild clematis was in blossom now—the

fences were white with it, and the rusty cedars were crowned with virgin wreaths, but the weeds were thick in the garden and in the potato patch. Dorothy, stretching her cramped back, looked longingly up the shadowy vista of the farm-lane, which had nothing to do but ramble off into the remotest green fields, where the daisies' faces were as white and clear as in early June.

One hot August night she came home late from the store. The stars were thick in the sky; the katydids made the night oppressive with their rasping questionings, and a hoarse revel of frogs kept the ponds from falling asleep in the shadow of the hills.

"Is thee very tired to-night, Dorothy?" her mother asked, as she took her seat on the low step of the porch. "Would thee mind turning old John out thyself?"

"No, mother, I'm not tired. But why—oh, *I* know!" cried Dorothy, with a quick laugh. "The dance—at Slocum's barn. I *thought* those boys were uncommonly helpful."

"Yes, dear, it's but natural they should want to see it. Hark! we can hear the music from here."

They listened, and the breeze brought across the fields the sound of fiddles and the rhythmic tramp of feet, softened by the distance. Dorothy's young pulses leaped.

"Mother, is it any harm for them just to *see* it? They have so little fun except what they get out of teasing and shirking."

"My dear, thy father would never countenance such a scene of frivolity, or permit one of his children to look upon it."

Through our eyes and ears the world takes possession of our hearts.

"Then I'm to spare the boys this temptation, mother? Thee will trust *me* to pass the barn?"

"I would trust my boys, if they were thy age Dorothy. But their resolution is tender, like their years."

It might be questioned whether the frame of mind in which the boys went to bed that night, under their mother's eye,—for Rachel could be firm in a case of conscience,—was more improving than the frivolity of Slocum's barn.

"Mother," called Dorothy, looking in at the kitchen window, where Rachel was stooping over the embers in the fireplace, to light a bedroom candle, "I want to speak to thee."

Rachel came to the window, screening the candle with her hand.

"Will thee trust *me* to look at the dancing a little while? It is so very near."

"Why, Dorothy, does thee *want* to?"

"Yes, mother, I believe I do. I've never seen a dance in my life. It cannot ruin me to look just once."

Rachel stood puzzled.

"Thee's old enough to judge for thyself, Dorothy. But, my child, do not tamper with thy inclinations through heedless curiosity. Thee knows

thee's more impulsive than I could wish—for thy own peace."

"I'll be very careful, mother. If I feel in the *least* wicked I will not look."

She kissed her mother's hand, which rested on the window-sill. Rachel did not like the kiss, or Dorothy's brilliant eyes and flushed cheeks, as the candle revealed them like a fair picture painted on the darkness. She hesitated, and Dorothy sped away up the lane with old John lagging at his halter.

Was it the music growing nearer that quickened her breathing, or only the closeness of the night, shut in between the wild grape-vine curtains, swung from one dark cedar column to another? She caught the sweet-brier breath as she hurried by, and now, a loop in the leafy curtain revealed the pond lying black in a hollow of the hills, with a whole heaven of stars reflected in it. Old John stumbled along over the stones, cropping the grass as he went. Dorothy tugged at his halter and urged him on to the head of the lane where two farm-gates stood at right angles. One of them was open, and a number of horses were tethered in a row along the fence within. They whinnied a cheerful greeting to John as Dorothy slipped his halter and shut him into the field adjoining. Now should she walk into temptation with her eyes and ears open? The gate stood wide, with only one field of perfumed meadow-grass between her and the lights and music of Slocum's barn! The sound

of revelry by night could hardly have taken a more innocent form than this rustic dancing of neighbors after a "raisin' bee," but had it been the rout of Comus and his crew, and Dorothy the Lady Una, trembling near, her heart could hardly have throbbed more thickly as she crossed the dewy meadow. A young maple stood within ten rods of the barn, and here she crouched in shadow.

The great doors stood wide open, and lanterns were hung from the beams lighting the space between the mows, where a dance was set, with youths and maidens in two long rows. The fiddlers sat on barrel-heads near the door; a lantern hanging just behind projected their shadows across the square of light on the trodden space in front where they executed a grotesque pantomime, keeping time to the music with spectral wavings and noddings. The dancers were Dorothy's young neighbors, whom she had known and yet not known all her life, but they had the strangeness of familiar faces seen suddenly in some fantastic dream.

Surely that was Nancy Slocum, in the bright pink gown, heading the line of girls, and that was Luke Jordan's sunburnt profile leaning from his place to pluck a straw from the mow behind him. They were marching now, and the measured tramp of feet, keeping solid time to the fiddles, set a strange tumult vibrating in Dorothy's blood; and now it stopped with a thrill as she recognized that Evesham was there marching with

the young men, and that his peer was not among them. The perception of his difference came to her with a vivid shock. He was coming forward now, with his light, firm step, formidable in evening dress, and with a smile of subtle triumph in his eyes, to meet Nancy Slocum, in the bright pink gown ; Dorothy felt she hated pink, of all the colors her faith had abjured. She could see, in spite of the obnoxious gown, that Nancy was very pretty. He was taking her first by the right hand, then by the left, and turning her gayly about ;—and now they were meeting again, for the fourth or fifth time, in the centre of the barn, with all eyes upon them, and the music lingered while Nancy, holding out her pink petticoats, coyly revolved around him. Then began a mysterious turning, and clasping of hands, and weaving of Nancy's pink frock and Evesham's dark blue coat and white breeches in and out of the line of figures, until they met at the door, and taking each other by both hands, swept with a joyous measure to the head of the barn. Dorothy gave a little choking sigh.

What a senseless whirl it was ! But she was thrilling with a new and strange excitement, too near the edge of pain to be long endured as a pleasure. If this were the influence of dancing, she did not wonder so much at her father's scruples,—and yet it held her like a spell.

All hands were lifted now, making an arch, through which Evesham, holding Nancy by the

hands, raced stooping and laughing. As they emerged at the door, he threw up his head to shake a brown lock back. He looked flushed, and boyishly gay, and his hazel eye searched the darkness with that subtle ray of triumph in it which had made Dorothy afraid. She drew back behind the tree and pressed her hot cheek to the cool, rough bark. She longed for the stillness of the starlit meadow, and the dim lane, with its faint perfumes and whispering leaves.

But now suddenly the music stopped, and the dance broke up in a tumult of voices. Dorothy stole backward in the shadow of the tree-trunk, till it joined the darkness of the meadow, and then fled,—stumbling along with blinded eyes, and the music still vibrating in her ears. There came a quick rush of footsteps behind her, swishing through the long grass. She did not look back, but quickened her pace, struggling to reach the gate. Evesham was there before her. He had swung the gate to and was leaning with his back against it, laughing and panting.

“I’ve caught you, Dorothy, you little deceiver! You’ll not get rid of me to-night with any of your tricks. I’m going to take you home to your mother, and tell her you were peeping at the dancing.”

“Mother knows I am here,” said Dorothy. “I asked her!” Her knees were trembling, and her heart almost choked her with its throbbing.

“I’m so glad you don’t dance, Dorothy. This

is much nicer than the barn ; and the katydids are better fiddlers than old Darby and his son. I'll open the gate if you will put your hand in mine, so I can be sure of you—you little runaway !”

“ I will stay here all night, first !” said Dorothy, in a low quivering voice.

“ As you choose. I shall be happy as long as you are here.”

Dead silence, while the katydids seemed to keep time to their heart-beats ; the fiddles began tuning for another reel, and the horses tethered near stretched out their necks with low inquiring whinneys.

“ Dorothy,” said Evesham, softly, leaning toward her and trying to see her face in the darkness, “ are you angry with me ? Don't you think you deserve a little punishment for the trick you played me at the mill-head ?”

“ It was thy fault for wetting me !” Dorothy was too excited and angry to cry, but she was as miserable as she had ever been in her life before. “ I didn't *want* thee to stay. People who force themselves where they are not wanted must take what they get !”

“ What did you say, Dorothy ?”

“ I say I didn't want thee then. I do not want thee now ! Thee may go back to thy fiddling and dancing ! I'd rather have one of those dumb brutes for company to-night than thee, Walter Evesham !”

“ Very well ! The reel has begun,” said Eve-

sham. "Fanny Jordan is waiting to dance it with me, or if she isn't she ought to be! Shall I open the gate for you?"

She passed out in silence, and the gate swung to with a heavy jar. She made good speed down the lane, and then waited outside the fence till her breath came more quietly.

"Is that thee, Dorothy?" Rachel's voice called from the porch. She came out to meet her, and they went along the walk together. "How damp thy forehead is, child! is the night so warm?" They sat down on the low steps, and Dorothy slid her arm under her mother's and laid her soft palm against the one less soft by twenty years of toil for others. "Thee's not been long, dear; was it as much as thee expected?"

"Mother, it was dreadful! I never wish to hear a fiddle again as long as I live!"

Rachel opened the way for Dorothy to speak further; she was not without some mild stirrings of curiosity on the subject herself; but Dorothy had no more to say.

They went into the house soon after, and as they separated for the night, Dorothy clung to her mother with a little nervous laugh.

"Mother, what is that text about Ephraim?"

"Ephraim is joined to idols?" Rachel suggested.

"Yes! Ephraim is joined to his idols!" said Dorothy, lifting her head. "Let him go!"

"Let him *alone*," corrected Rachel.

"Let him *alone* !" Dorothy repeated. "That is better yet."

"What's thee thinking of, dear?"

"Oh, I'm thinking about the dance in the barn."

"I'm glad thee looks at it in that light," said Rachel.

Dorothy knelt by her bed in the low chamber under the eaves, crying to herself that she was not the child of her mother any more.

She felt she had lost something, which, in truth, had never been hers. It was only the unconscious poise of her unawakened girlhood which had been stirred. She had mistaken it for that abiding peace which is not lost or won in a day.

Dorothy could not stifle the spring thrills in her blood any more than she could crush its color out of her cheek or brush the ripples out of her bright hair, but she longed for the cool grays and the still waters. She prayed that the "grave and beautiful damsel called Discretion" might take her by the hand and lead her to that "upper chamber, whose name is Peace." She lay awake, listening to the music from the barn, and waiting through breathless silences for it to begin again. She wondered if Fanny Jordan had grown any prettier since she had seen her as a half-grown girl; and then she despised herself for the thought. The katydids seemed to beat their wings upon her brain, and all the noises of the night, far and near, came

to her strained senses, as if her silent chamber were a whispering gallery. The clock struck twelve, and in the silence that followed she missed the music ; but voices, talking and laughing, were coming down the lane. There was the clink of a horse's hoof on the stones ; now it was lost on the turf ; and now they were all trooping noisily past the house. She buried her head in her pillow, and tried to bury with it the consciousness that she was wondering if Evesham were there, laughing with the rest.

Yes, Evesham was there. He walked with Farmer Jordan, behind the young men and girls, and discussed with him, somewhat absently, the war news and the prices of grain.

As they passed the dark old house, spreading its wide roofs, like a hen gathering her chickens under her wing, he became suddenly silent. A white curtain flapped in and out of an upper window. It was the window of the boys' room ; but Evesham's instincts failed him there.

"Queer kinks them old Friend preachers git into their heads sometimes !" said farmer Jordan, as they passed the empty mill. "Now what do you s'pose took Uncle Tommy Barton off right on top of plantin', leavin' his wife 'n' critters 'n' child'en to look after themselves? Mighty good preachin' it ought to be, to make up for such practicin'. Wonderful set ag'in the war, Uncle Tommy is ! He's a-preachin' up peace now. But Lord ! all the preachin' sence Moses won't keep

men from fightin' when their blood's up and there's ter'tory in it !"

"It makes saints of the women," said Evesham shortly.

"Wal, yes ! Saints in heaven before their time, some of 'em. There's Dorothy, now. *She'll* hoe her row with any saint *in* the kingdom or out of it. I never see a hulsomer-lookin' gal. My Luke, he run the furrers in her corn-patch last May. Said it made him sick to see a gal like that a-staggerin' after a plow. She wouldn't more'n *half* let him ! She's a proud little piece. They're all proud, Quakers is. I never could see no 'poorness of spirit,' come to git at 'em ! And they're wonderful clannish, too. My Luke, he'd a notion he'd like to run the hull concern—Dorothy 'n' all ; but I told him he might 's well p'int off. Them Quaker gals don't never marry out o' meetin'. Besides, the farm's too poor !"

"Good-night, Mr. Jordan !" said Evesham suddenly. "I'm off across lots !" He leaped the fence, crashed through the alder hedge-row, and disappeared in the dusky meadow.

Evesham was by no means satisfied with his experiments in planetary distances. Somewhere, he felt sure, either in his orbit or hers, there must be a point where Dorothy would be less insensible to the attraction of atoms in the mass. Thus far, she had reversed the laws of the spheres, and the greater had followed the less. When she had first begun to hold a permanent place in his thoughts,

he had invested her with something of that atmosphere of peace and cool passivity which hedges in the women of her faith. It had been like a thin, clear glass, revealing her loveliness, but cutting off the magnetic currents. A young man is not long satisfied with the mystery his thoughts have woven around the woman who is their object. Evesham had grown impatient ; he had broken the spell of her sweet remoteness. He had touched her, and found her human,—deliciously, distractingly human, but with a streak of obduracy which history has attributed to the Quakers under persecution. In vain he haunted the mill-dam, and bribed the boys with traps and pop-guns, and lingered at the well-curb to ask Dorothy for water, which did not reach his thirst. She was there in the flesh, with her arms aloft, balancing the well-sweep, while he stooped with his lips at the bucket ; but in spirit she was unapproachable. He felt, with disgust at his own persistence, that she even grudged him the water ! He grew savage and restless, and fretted over the subtle changes which he counted in Dorothy, as the summer waned. She was thinner and paler,—perhaps with the heats of harvest, which had not, indeed, been burdensome from its abundance. Her eyes were darker and shyer, and her voice more languid. Was she wearing down, with all this work and care ? A fierce disgust possessed him, that this sweet life should be cast into the breach between faith and works.

He did not see that Rachel Barton had changed,

too,—with a change that meant more, at her age, than Dorothy's flushings and palings. He did not miss the mother's bent form from the garden, or the bench by the kitchen door, where she had been used to wash the milk-things.

Dorothy washed the milk-things now, and the mother spent her days in the sunny east room, between her bed and the easy-chair, where she sat and mused for hours over the five letters she had received from her husband in as many months. The boys had, in a measure, justified their father's faith in them, since Rachel's illness, and Dorothy was released from much of her out-door work ; but the silence of the kitchen, when she was there alone with her ironing and dish-washing, was a heavier burden than she had yet known.

Nature sometimes strikes in upon the hopeless monotony of life in remote farm-houses, with one of her phenomenal moods. They come like besoms of destruction ; but they scatter the web of stifling routine ; they fling into the stiffening pool the stone which jars the atoms into crystal.

The storms which had ambushed in the lurid August skies, and circled ominously round the horizon during the first weeks of September, broke at last in an equinoctial which was long remembered in the mill-house. It took its place in the family calendar of momentous dates with the hard winter of 1800 ; with the late frost, which coated the incipient apples with ice, and froze the new

potatoes in the ground ; and with the year the typhus got into the valley.

The rain had been falling a night and a day. It had been welcomed with thanksgiving ; but it had worn out its welcome some hours since, and now the early darkness was coming on without a lull in the storm. Dorothy and the two biggest boys had made the rounds of the farm-buildings, seeing all safe for the second night. The barns and mill stood on high ground, while the house occupied the sheltered hollow between. Little streams from the hills were washing in turbid currents across the lower levels ; the waste-weir roared as in early spring ; the garden was inundated, and the meadow a shallow pond. The sheep had been driven into the upper barn floor ; the chickens were in the corn-bin ; and old John and the cows had been transferred from the stable, which stood low, to the weighing-floor of the mill. A gloomy echoing and gurgling sounded from the dark wheel-chamber, where the water was rushing under the wheel, and jarring it with its tumult. At eight o'clock the wood-shed was flooded, and water began to creep under the kitchen door. Dorothy and the boys carried armfuls of wood, and stacked them in the passage to the sitting-room, two steps higher up. At nine o'clock the boys were sent, protesting, to bed ; and Dorothy, looking out of their window, as she fumbled about in the dark for a pair of Shep's trowsers which needed mending, saw a lantern flickering up the road. It was Evesham, on

his way to the mill-dams. The light glimmered on his oil-skin coat as he climbed the stile behind the well-curb.

"He raised the flood-gates at noon," Dorothy said to herself. "I wonder if he is anxious about the dams." She resolved to watch for his return, but she was busy settling her mother for the night when she heard his footsteps on the porch. The roar of water from the hills startled Dorothy as she opened the door;—it had increased in violence within an hour. A gust of wind and rain followed Evesham into the entry.

"Come in," she said, running lightly across the sitting-room to close the door of her mother's room.

He stood opposite her on the hearth-rug and looked into her eyes across the estrangement of the summer. It was not Dorothy of the mill-head, or of Slocum's meadow, or the cold maid of the well: it was a very anxious, lovely little girl, in a crumbling old house, with a foot of water in the cellar, and a sick mother in the next room. She had forgotten about Ephraim and his idols; she picked up Shep's trowsers from the rug, where she had dropped them, and looking intently at her thimble finger, told him she was very glad he had come.

"Did you think I wouldn't come?" said he. "I'm going to take you home with me, Dorothy,—you and your mother and the boys. It's not fit for you to be here alone!"

"Do you know of any danger?"

"I *know* of none, but water's a thing you can't depend on. It's an ugly rain ; older men than your father remember nothing like it."

"I shall be glad to have mother go, and Jimmy ; —the house is very damp. It's an awful night for her to be out, though !"

"She *must* go !" said Evesham. "You must all go. I'll be back in half an hour—"

"I shall not go," Dorothy said ; "the boys and I must stay and look after the stock."

"What's that ?" Evesham was listening to a trickling of water outside the door.

"Oh ! it's from the kitchen ! The door's blown open, I guess !"

Dorothy looked out into the passage ; a strong wind was blowing in from the kitchen, where the water covered the floor and washed against the chimney.

"This is a nice state of things ! What's all this wood here for ?"

"The wood-shed's under water, you know."

"You must get yourself ready, Dorothy ! I'll come for your mother first in the chaise."

"I cannot go," she said ; "I don't believe there is any danger. This old house has stood for eighty years ; it's not likely this is the first big rain in all that time." Dorothy's spirits had risen. "Besides, I have a family of orphans to take care of ! See here," she said, stooping over a basket in the shadow of the chimney. It was the "hospital tent," and as she uncovered it, a brood of belated

chickens stretched out their thin necks with plaintive peeps.

Dorothy covered them with her hands, and they nestled with cozy twitterings into silence.

"You're a kind of special providence, aren't you, Dorothy? But I've no sympathy with chickens who *will* be born just in time for the equinoccial."

"I didn't want them," said Dorothy, anxious to defend her management. "The old hen stole her nest, and she left them the day before the rain. She's making herself comfortable now in the corn-bin."

"She ought to be made an example of;—that's the way of the world, however;—retribution don't fall always on the right shoulders. I must go now. We'll take your mother and Jimmy first, and then, if you *won't* come, you shall let me stay with you. The mill is safe enough, anyhow."

Evesham returned with the chaise and a man who he insisted should drive away old John and the cows, so Dorothy should have less care. The mother was packed into the chaise with a vast collection of wraps, which almost obliterated Jimmy. As they started, Dorothy ran out in the rain with her mother's spectacles and the five letters, which always lay in a box on the table by her bed. Evesham took her gently by the arms and lifted her back across the puddles to the stoop.

As the chaise drove off, she went back to the sitting-room and crouched on the rug, her wet hair

shining in the firelight. She took out her chickens one by one and held them under her chin, with tender words and finger-touches. If September chickens have hearts as susceptible as their bodies, Dorothy's orphans must have been imperilled by her caresses.

"Look here, Dorothy! Where's my trowsers?" cried Shep, opening the door at the foot of the stairs.

Reuby was behind him, fully arrayed in the aforesaid articles, and carrying the bedroom candle.

"Here they are—with a needle in them," said Dorothy. "What are you getting up in the middle of the night for?"

"Well, I guess it's time somebody's up. Who's that man driving off our cows?"

"Goosey! It's Walter Evesham's man. He came for mother and all of us, and he's taken old John and the cows to save us so much foddering."

"Ain't we going too?"

"I don't see why we should, just because there happens to be a little water in the kitchen. I've often seen it come in there before."

"Well, thee never saw anything like *this* before—nor anybody else, either," said Shep.

"I don't care," said Reuby; "I wish there'd come a reg'lar flood. We could climb up in the mill-loft and go sailin' down over Jordan's meadows. Wouldn't Luke Jordan open that big mouth of his to see us heave in sight about cock-crow—

three sheets in the wind, and the old tackle a-swingin' !"

"Do hush !" said Dorothy. "We may have to try it yet."

"There's an awful roarin' from our window," said Shep. "Thee can't half hear it down here. Come out on the stoop. The old ponds have got their dander up this time."

They opened the door and listened, standing together on the low step. There was, indeed, a hoarse murmur from the hills which grew louder as they listened.

"Now she's comin' ! There goes the stable-door ! There was only one hinge left, anyway," said Reuby. "Mighty ! Look at that wave !"

It crashed through the gate, swept across the garden, and broke at their feet, sending a thin sheet of water over the floor and stoop.

"Now it's gone into the entry. Why didn't thee shut the door, Shep ?"

"Well, I think we'd better clear out, anyhow. Let's go over to the mill. Say, Dorothy, sha'n't we ?"

"Wait. There comes another wave !"

The second onset was not so violent, but they hastened to gather together a few blankets, and the boys filled their pockets, with a delightful sense of unusualness and peril, almost equal to a shipwreck or an attack by Indians. Dorothy took her unlucky chickens under her cloak and they made a rush, all together, across the road and up the slope to the mill.

"Why didn't we think to bring a lantern?" said Dorothy, as they huddled together on the platform of the scale. "Will *thee* go back after one, Shep?"

"If Reuby'll go, too."

"Well, *my* legs are wet enough now! What's the use of a lantern? Mighty Moses! What's that?"

"The old mill's got under weigh!" cried Shep. "*She's* going to tune up for Kingdom Come!"

A furious head of water was rushing along the race. The great wheel creaked and swung over, and with a shudder the old mill awoke from its long sleep. The cogs clenched their teeth, the shafting shook and rattled, the stones whirled merrily round.

"Now she goes it!" cried Shep, as the humming increased to a tremor, and the tremor to a wild, unsteady din, till the timbers shook and the bolts and windows rattled. "I just wish *father* could hear them old stones hum."

"Oh, this is awful!" said Dorothy. She was shivering, and sick with terror at this unseemly midnight revelry of her grandfather's old mill. It was as if it had awakened in a fit of delirium, and given itself up to a wild travesty of its years of peaceful work.

Shep was creeping about in the darkness.

"Look here! We've got to stop this clatter somehow. The stones are hot now. The whole thing'll burn up like tinder if we can't chock her wheels."

"Shep! Does *thee mean* it?"

"Thee'll see if I don't. Thee won't need any lantern either."

"Can't we break away the race?"

"Oh, there's a way to stop it. There's the tip-trough, but it's down-stairs, and we can't reach the pole."

"I'll go," said Dorothy.

"It's outside, thee knows. Thee'll get awful *wet*, Dorothy."

"Well, I'd just as soon be drowned as burned up. Come with me to the head of the stairs."

They felt their way hand in hand in the darkness, and Dorothy went down alone. She had forgotten about the "tip-trough," but she understood its significance. In a few moments a cascade shot out over the wheel, sending the water far into the garden.

"Right over my chrysanthemum bed!" sighed Dorothy.

The wheel swung slower and slower, the mocking tumult subsided, and the old mill sank into sleep again.

There was nothing now to drown the roaring of the floods and the steady drive of the storm.

"There's a lantern," Shep called from the door. He had opened the upper half, and was shielding himself behind it. "I guess it's Evesham coming back for us. He's a pretty good sort of a fellow, after all; don't thee think so, Dorothy? He owes us something for drowning us out at the sheep-washing."

"What *does all* this mean?" said Dorothy, as Evesham swung himself over the half-door, and his lantern showed them in their various phases of wetness.

"There's a big leak in the lower dam! I've been afraid of it all along; there's something wrong in the principle of the thing."

Dorothy felt as if he had called her grandfather a fraud, and her father a delusion and a snare. She had grown up in the belief that the mill-dams were part of Nature's original plan, in laying the foundations of the hills;—but it was no time to be resentful, and the facts were against her.

"Dorothy," said Evesham, as he tucked the buffalo about her, "this is the second time I've tried to save you from drowning, but you never will wait! *I'm* all ready to be a hero, but *you* won't be a heroine."

"I'm too practical for a heroine," said Dorothy. "There! I've forgotten my chickens."

"I'm glad of it! Those chickens were a mistake. They oughtn't to be perpetuated."

Youth and happiness can stand a great deal of cold water; but it was not to be expected that Rachel Barton should be especially benefited by her night journey through the floods. Evesham waited in the hall when he heard the door of her room open next morning. Dorothy came slowly down the stairs; he knew by her lingering step and the softly closed door that she was not happy.

"Mother is very sick," she answered his inquiry.

"It is like the turn of inflammation and rheumatism she had once before. It will be very slow,—and oh! it is such suffering! Why *do* the best women in the world have to suffer so?"

"Will you let me talk things over with you after breakfast, Dorothy?"

"Oh yes!" she said; "there is so much to do and think about. I *wish* father *would* come home!"

The tears came into Dorothy's eyes as she looked at him. Rest—such as she had never known, or felt the need of till now—and strength immeasurable, since it would multiply her own by an unknown quantity, stood within reach of her hand, but she might not put it out! And Evesham was dizzy with the struggle between longing and resolution.

He had braced his nerves for a long and hungry waiting, but fate had yielded suddenly;—the floods had brought her to him,—his flotsam and jetsam, more precious than all the guarded treasures of the earth. She had come, with all her girlish, unconscious beguilements, and all her womanly cares, and anxieties too. He must strive against her sweetness, while he helped her to bear her burdens.

"Now about the boys, Dorothy," he said two hours later, as they stood together by the fire in the low, oak-finished room at the foot of the stairs, which was his office and book-room. The door was ajar, so Dorothy might hear her mother's bell. "Don't you think they had better be sent to school somewhere?"

"Yes," said Dorothy, "they *ought* to go to school—but—well, I may as well tell thee the truth! There's very little to do it with. We've had a poor summer. I suppose I've managed badly, and mother has been sick a good while."

"You've forgotten about the pond-rent, Dorothy."

"No," she said, with a quick flush; "I hadn't forgotten it; but I couldn't *ask* thee for it!"

"I spoke to your father about monthly payments; but he said better leave it to accumulate for emergencies. Shouldn't you call this an 'emergency,' Dorothy?"

"But does thee think we ought to ask rent for a pond that has all leaked away?"

"Oh, there's pond enough left, and I've used it a dozen times over this summer! I would be ashamed to tell you, Dorothy, how my horn has been exalted in your father's absence. However, retribution has overtaken me at last; I'm responsible, you know, for all the damage last night. It was in the agreement that I should keep up the dams."

"Oh!" said Dorothy; "is thee sure?"

Evesham laughed.

"If your father were like any other man, Dorothy, he'd make me 'sure,' when he gets home! I will defend myself to this extent: I've patched and propped them all summer, after every rain, and tried to provide for the fall storms; but there's a flaw in the original plan—"

"Thee said that once before," said Dorothy.
"I wish thee wouldn't say it again."

"Why not?"

"Because I love those old mill-dams! I've trotted over them ever since I could walk alone!"

"You shall trot over them still! We will make them as strong as the everlasting hills. They shall outlast our time, Dorothy."

"Well, about the rent," said Dorothy. "I'm afraid it will not take us through the winter, unless there is something I can do. Mother couldn't possibly be moved now, and if she could, it will be months before the house is fit to live in. But we cannot stay here in comfort, unless thy mother will let me make up in some way. Mother will not need me all the time, and I know thy mother hires women to spin."

"She'll let you do all you like, if it will make you any happier. But you don't know how much money is coming to you. Come, let us look over the figures."

He lowered the lid of the black mahogany secretary, placed a chair for Dorothy, and opened a great ledger before her, bending down, with one hand on the back of the chair, the other turning the leaves of the ledger. Considering the index, and the position of the letter B in the alphabet, he was a long time finding his place. Dorothy looked out of the window, over the tops of the yellowing woods, to the gray and turbid river below. Where the hemlocks darkened the channel of the glen, she

heard the angry floods rushing down. The formless rain mists hung low, and hid the opposite shore.

"See!" said Evesham, with his finger wandering rather vaguely down the page. "Your father went away on the third of May. The first month's rent came due on the third of June. That was the day I opened the gate and let the water down on you, Dorothy. I'm responsible for everything, you see,—even for the old ewe that was drowned!"

His words came in a dream as he bent over her, resting his unsteady hand heavily on the ledger.

Dorothy laid her cheek on the date she could not see, and burst into tears.

"Don't—please don't!" he said, straightening himself, and locking his hands behind him. "I am human, Dorothy!"

The weeks of Rachel's sickness that followed were perhaps the best discipline Evesham's life had ever known. He held the perfect flower of his bliss, unclosing in his hand; yet he might barely permit himself to breathe its fragrance! His mother had been a strong and prosperous woman; there was little he could ever do for her. It was well for him to feel the weight of helpless infirmity in his arms, as he lifted Dorothy's mother from side to side of her bed, while Dorothy's hands smoothed the coverings. It was well for him to see the patient endurance of suffering, such as his youth and strength defied. It was bliss to wait on Dorothy, and follow her with little watchful hom-

ages, received with a shy wonder which was delicious to him,—for Dorothy's nineteen years had been too full of service to others to leave much room for dreams of a kingdom of her own. Her silent presence in her mother's sick-room awed him. Her gentle, decisive voice and ways, her composure and unshaken endurance through nights of watching and days of anxious confinement and toil, gave him a new reverence for the mysteries of her unfathomable womanhood.

The time of Friend Barton's return drew near. It must be confessed that Dorothy welcomed it with a little dread, and Evesham did not welcome it at all. On the contrary, the thought of it roused all his latent obstinacy and aggressiveness. The first day or two after the momentous arrival wore a good deal upon every member of the family, except Margaret Evesham, who was provided with a philosophy of her own, which amounted almost to a gentle obtuseness, and made her a comfortable non-conductor, preventing more electric souls from shocking each other.

On the morning of the fourth day, Dorothy came out of her mother's room with a tray of empty dishes in her hands. She saw Evesham at the stair-head and hovered about in the shadowy part of the hall till he should go down.

"Dorothy," he said, "I'm waiting for you." He took the tray from her and rested it on the banisters. "Your father and I have talked over all the business. He's got the impression I'm one

of the most generous fellows in the world. I intend to let him rest in that delusion for the present. Now may I speak to him about something else, Dorothy? Have I not waited long enough for my heart's desire?"

"Take care!" said Dorothy, softly,—“thee'll upset the tea-cups!"

"Confound the tea-cups!" He stooped to place the irrelevant tray on the floor, but now Dorothy was half-way down the staircase. He caught her on the landing, and taking both her hands, drew her down on the step beside him.

"Dorothy, this is the second time you've taken advantage of my unsuspecting nature! This time you shall be punished! You needn't try to hide your face, you little traitor! There's no repentance in you!"

"If I'm to be punished there's no need of repentance."

"Dorothy, do you know, I've never heard you speak my name, except once, when you were angry with me."

"When was that?"

"The night I caught you at the gate. You said, 'I would rather have one of those dumb brutes for company than thee, Walter Evesham.' You said it in the fiercest little voice! Even the 'thee' sounded as if you hated me."

"I did," said Dorothy promptly. "I had reason to."

"Do you hate me now, Dorothy?"

"Not so much as I did then."

"What an implacable little Quaker you are!"

"A tyrant is *always* hated," said Dorothy, trying to release her hands.

"If you will look in my eyes, Dorothy, and call me by my name, just once,—I'll let 'thee' go."

"Walter Evesham!" said Dorothy, with great firmness and decision.

"No! that won't do! You must look at me,—and say it softly,—in a little sentence, Dorothy!"

"Will thee please let me go, Walter?"

Walter Evesham was a man of his word, but as Dorothy sped away, he looked as if he wished he were not.

The next evening, Friend Barton sat by his wife's easy-chair, drawn into the circle of firelight, with his elbows on his knees, and his head between his hands.

The worn spot on the top of his head had widened considerably during the summer, but Rachel looked stronger and brighter than she had for many a day. There was even a little flush on her cheek, but that might have come from the excitement of a long talk with her husband.

"I'm sorry thee takes it so hard, Thomas; I was afraid thee would. But the way didn't seem to open for me to do much. I can see now, that Dorothy's inclinations have been turning this way for some time, though it's not likely she would own it, poor child; and Walter Evesham's not one who is easily gainsayed. If *thee* could only feel

differently about it, I can't say but it would make me very happy to see Dorothy's heart satisfied. Can't thee bring thyself into unity with it, father? He's a nice young man. They're nice folks. Thee can't complain of the *blood*. Margaret Evesham tells me a cousin of hers married one of the Lawrences, so we are kind of kin, after all."

"I don't complain of the blood; they're well enough placed as far as the world is concerned! But their ways are not our ways, Rachel! Their faith is not our faith!"

"Well! I can't see such a very great difference, come to live among them! 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' To comfort the widow and the fatherless, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world!—thee's always preached that, father! I really can't see any more worldliness here than among many households with us,—and I'm sure if we haven't been the widow and the fatherless this summer, we've been next to it!"

Friend Barton raised his head a little, and rested his forehead on his clasped hands.

"Rachel," he said, "look at that!" He pointed upward to an ancient sword with belt and trappings, which gleamed on the panelled chimney-piece—crossed by an old queen's arm. Evesham had given up his large sunny room to Dorothy's mother, but he had not removed all his lares and penates.

"Yes, dear; that's his grandfather's sword—Colonel Evesham, who was killed at Saratoga!"

“ Why does he hang up that thing of abomination for a light and a guide to his footsteps, if his way be not far from ours ? ”

“ Why, father ! Colonel Evesham was a good man !—I dare say he fought for the same reason that thee preaches—because he felt it his duty ! ”

“ I find no fault with *him*, Rachel. Doubtless he followed his light, as thee says ; but he followed it in better ways too. He cleared land and built a homestead and a meeting-house. Why don't his grandson hang up his old broad-ax and plough-share, and worship *them*, if he must have idols, instead of that symbol of strife and bloodshed. Does thee want our Dorothy's children to grow up under the shadow of that sword ? ”

There was a stern light of prophecy in the old man's eyes.

“ Maybe Walter Evesham would take it down,” said Rachel, leaning back wearily and closing her eyes. “ I never was much of a hand to argue, even if I had the strength for it ; but it would hurt me a good deal—I must say it—if thee denies Dorothy in this matter, Thomas. It's a very serious thing to have old folks try to turn young hearts the way they think they ought to go. I remember now,—I was thinking about it last night, and it all came back as fresh ! I don't know that I ever told thee about that young friend who visited me before I heard thee preach at Stony Valley ? Well ! *father*, *he* was wonderful pleased with him, but I didn't feel any drawing that way.

He urged me a good deal, more than was pleasant for either of us. He wasn't at all reconciled to thee, Thomas, if thee remember."

"I remember," said Thomas Barton, "it was an anxious time."

"Well dear, if father *had* insisted, and sent thee away, I can't say but life would have been a very different thing to me."

"I thank thee for saying it, Rachel." Friend Barton's head drooped between his hands.

"Thee's suffered much through me ; thee's had a hard life, but thee's been well beloved."

The flames leaped and flickered in the chimney, they touched the wrinkled hands, whose only beauty was in their deeds ; they crossed the room and lit the pillows where, for three generations, young heads had dreamed, and gray heads had watched and suffered ; then they mounted to the chimney and struck a gleam from the sword.

"Well, father," said Rachel, "what answer is thee going to give Walter Evesham ?"

"I shall say no more, my dear. Let the young folks have their way. There's strife and contention enough in the world without my stirring up more. And it may be I'm resisting the Master's will ; I left her in His care : this may be His way of dealing with her."

Walter Evesham did not take down his grandfather's sword. Fifty years later another went up beside it,—the sword of a young Evesham who never left the field of Shiloh ; and beneath them

both hangs the portrait of the Quaker grandmother, Dorothy Evesham, at the age of sixty-nine.

The golden ripples, silver now, are hidden under a "round-eared cap," the quick flush has faded in her cheek, and fold upon fold of snowy gauze and creamy silk are crossed over the bosom that thrilled to the fiddles of Slocum's barn. She has found the cool grays and the still waters ; but on Dorothy's children rests the "Shadow of the Sword" !

AN INSPIRED LOBBYIST.

BY J. W. DEFoREST.

A CERTAIN fallen angel (politeness toward his numerous and influential friends forbids me to mention his name abruptly) lately entered into the body of Mr. Ananias Pullwool, of Washington, D. C.

As the said body was a capacious one, having been greatly enlarged circumferentially since it acquired its full longitude, there was accommodation in it for both the soul of Pullwool himself (it was a very little one) and for his distinguished visitant. Indeed, there was so much room in it that they never crowded each other, and that Pullwool hardly knew, if he even so much as mistrusted, that there was a chap in with him. But other people must have been aware of this double tenantry, or at least must have been shrewdly suspicious of it, for it soon became quite common to hear fellows say, "Pullwool has got the Devil in him."

There was, indeed, a remarkable change — a change not so much moral as physical and mental — in this gentleman's ways of deporting and behaving himself. From being logy in movement and slow if not absolutely dull in mind, he became wonderfully agile and energetic. He had been a lobbyist, and he remained a lobbyist still, but such a different one, so much more vigorous, eager, clever, and impudent, that his best friends (if he could be said to have any friends) scarcely knew him for the same Pullwool. His fat fingers were in the buttonholes of Congressmen from the time when they put those buttonholes on in the morning to the time when they took them off at night. He seemed to be at one and the same moment treating some honorable member in the bar-room of the Arlington and running another honorable member to cover in the committee-rooms of the Capitol. He log-rolled bills which nobody else believed could be log-rolled, and he pocketed fees which absolutely and point-blank refused to go into other people's pockets. During this short period of his life he was the most successful and famous lobbyist in Washington, and the most sought after by the most rascally and desperate claimants of unlawful millions.

But, like many another man who has the Devil in him, Mr. Pullwool ran his luck until he ran himself into trouble. An investigating committee pounced upon him ; he was put in confinement for refusing to answer questions ; his filchings were

held up to the execration of the envious both by virtuous members and a virtuous press ; and when he at last got out of durance he found it good to quit the District of Columbia for a season. Thus it happened that Mr. Pullwool and his eminent lodger took the cars and went to and fro upon the earth seeking what they might devour.

In the course of their travels they arrived in a little State, which may have been Rhode Island, or may have been Connecticut, or may have been one of the Pleiades, but which at all events had two capitals. Without regard to Morse's Gazetteer, or to whatever other Gazetteer may now be in currency, we shall affirm that one of these capitals was called Slowburg and the other Fastburg. For some hundreds of years (let us say five hundred, in order to be sure and get it high enough) Slowburg and Fastburg had shared between them, turn and turn about, year on and year off, all the gubernatorial and legislative pomps and emoluments that the said State had to bestow. On the 1st of April of every odd year the governor, preceded by citizen soldiers, straddling or curvetting through the mud — the governor, followed by twenty barouches full of eminent citizens, who were not known to be eminent at any other time, but who made a rush for a ride on this occasion as certain old ladies do at funerals—the governor, taking off his hat to pavements full of citizens of all ages, sizes, and colors, who did not pretend to be eminent—the governor, catching a fresh cold at

every corner, and wishing the whole thing were passing at the equator,—the governor triumphantly entered Slowburg, — observe, Slowburg,— read his always enormously long message there, and convened the legislature there. On the 1st of April of every even year the same governor, or a better one who had succeeded him, went through the same ceremonies in Fastburg. Each of these capitals boasted, or rather blushed over, a shabby old barn of a State-House, and each of them maintained a company of foot-guards and ditto of horse-guards, the latter very loose in their saddles. In each the hotels and boarding-houses had a full year and a lean year, according as the legislature sat in the one or in the other. In each there was a loud call for fresh shad and stewed oysters, or a comparatively feeble call for fresh shad and stewed oysters, under the same biennial conditions.

Such was the oscillation of grandeur and power between the two cities. It was an old-time arrangement, and like many other old-fashioned things, as for instance wood fires in open fire-places, it had not only its substantial merits but its superficial inconveniences. Every year certain ancient officials were obliged to pack up hundreds of public documents and expedite them from Fastburg to Slowburg, or from Slowburg back to Fastburg. Every year there was an expense of a few dollars on this account, which the State treasurer figured up with agonies of terror, and which the opposition roared at as if the administration could have

helped it. The State-Houses were two mere deformities of patched plaster and leprous whitewash ; they were such shapeless, graceless, dilapidated wigwams, that no sensitive patriot could look at them without wanting to fly to the uttermost parts of the earth ; and yet it was not possible to build new ones, and hardly possible to obtain appropriations enough to shingle out the weather ; for Fastburg would vote no money to adorn Slowburg, and Slowburg was equally niggardly toward Fastburg. The same jealousy produced the same frugality in the management of other public institutions, so that the patients of the lunatic asylum were not much better lodged and fed than the average sane citizen, and the gallows-birds in the State's prison were brought down to a temperance which caused admirers of that species of fowl to tremble with indignation. In short, the two capitals were as much at odds as the two poles of a magnet, and the results of this repulsion were not all of them worthy of hysterical admiration.

But advantages seesawed with disadvantages. In this double-ender of a State political jobbery was at fault, because it had no headquarters. It could not get together a ring ; it could not raise a corps of lobbyists. Such few axe-grinders as there were had to dodge back and forth between the Fastburg grindstone and the Slowburg grindstone, without ever fairly getting their tools sharpened. Legislature here and legislature there ; it was like guessing at a pea between two thimbles ; you could

hardly ever put your finger on the right one. Then what one capital favored the other disfavored ; and between them appropriations were kicked and hustled under the table ; the grandest of railroad schemes shrunk into waste-paper baskets ; in short, the public treasury was next door to the unapproachable. Such, indeed, was the desperate condition of lobbyists in this State, that, had it contained a single philanthropist of the advanced radical stripe, he would surely have brought in a bill for their relief and encouragement.

Into the midst of this happily divided community dropped Mr. Ananias Pullwool with the Devil in him. It remains to be seen whether this pair could figure up anything worth pocketing out of the problem of two capitals.

It was one of the even years, and the legislature met in Fastburg, and the little city was brimful. Mr. Pullwool with difficulty found a place for himself without causing the population to slop over. Of course he went to a hotel, for he needed to make as many acquaintances as possible, and he knew that a bar was a perfect hot-house for ripening such friendships as he cared for. He took the best room he could get ; and as soon as chance favored he took a better one, with parlor attached ; and on the sideboard in the parlor he always had cigars and decanters. The result was that in a week or so he was on jovial terms with several senators, numerous members of the lower house, and all the members of the " third house." But lobbying did

not work in Fastburg as Mr. Pullwool had found it to work in other capitals. He exhibited the most dazzling double-edged axes, but nobody would grind them ; he pointed out the most attractive and convenient of logs for rolling, but nobody would put a lever to them.

“ What the doose does this mean ? ” he at last inquired of Mr. Josiah Dicker, a member who had smoked dozens of his cigars and drunk quarts out of his decanters. “ I don’t understand this little old legislature at all, Mr. Dicker. Nobody wants to make any money ; at least, nobody has the spirit to try to make any. And yet the State is full ; never been bled a drop ; full as a tick. What does it mean ? ”

Mr. Dicker looked disconsolate. Perhaps it may be worth a moment’s time to explain that he could not well look otherwise. Broken in fortune and broken in health, he was a failure and knew it. His large forehead showed power, and he was in fact a lawyer of some ability ; and still he could not support his family, could not keep a mould of mortgages from creeping all over his house-lot, and had so many creditors that he could not walk the streets comfortably. The trouble lay in hard drinking, with its resultant waste of time, infidelity to trust, and impatience of application. Thin, haggard, duskily pallid, deeply wrinkled at forty, his black eyes watery and set in baggy circles of a dull brown, his lean dark hands shaky and dirty, his linen wrinkled and buttonless,

his clothing frayed and unbrushed, he was an impersonation of failure. He had gone into the legislature with a desperate hope of somehow finding money in it, and as yet he had discovered nothing more than his beggarly three dollars a day, and he felt himself more than ever a failure. No wonder that he wore an air of profound depression, approaching to absolute wretchedness and threatening suicide.

He looked the more cast down by contrast with the successful Mr. Pullwool, gaudily alight with satin and jewelry, and shining with conceit. Pullwool, by the way, although a dandy (that is, such a dandy as one sees in gambling-saloons and behind liquor-bars), was far from being a thing of beauty. He was so obnoxiously gross and shapeless, that it seemed as if he did it on purpose and to be irritating. His fat head was big enough to make a dwarf of, hunchback and all. His mottled cheeks were vast and pendulous to that degree that they inspired the imaginative beholder with terror, as reminding him of avalanches and landslides which might slip their hold at the slightest shock and plunge downward in a path of destruction. One puffy eyelid drooped in a sinister way ; obviously that was the eye that the Devil had selected for his own ; he kept it well curtained for purposes of concealment. Looking out of this peep-hole, the Satanic badger could see a short, thick nose, and by leaning forward a little he could get a glimpse of a broad chin of several stories. Another unpleasing feature was a

full set of false teeth, which grinned in a ravenous fashion that was truly disquieting, as if they were capable of devouring the whole internal revenue. Finally, this continent of physiognomy was diversified by a gigantic hairy wart, which sprouted defiantly from the temple nearest the game eye, as though Lucifer had accidentally poked one of his horns through. Mr. Dicker, who was a sensitive, squeamish man (as drunkards sometimes are, through bad digestion and shaky nerves), could hardly endure the sight of this wart, and always wanted to ask Pullwool why he didn't cut it off.

"What's the meaning of it all?" persisted the Washington wire-puller, surveying the Fastburg wire-puller with bland superiority, much as the city mouse may have surveyed the country mouse.

"Two capitals," responded Dicker, withdrawing his nervous glance from the wart, and locking his hands over one knee to quiet their trembling.

Mr. Pullwool, having the Old Harry in him, and being consequently full of all malice and subtlety, perceived at once the full scope and force of the explanation.

"I see," he said, dropping gently back into his arm-chair, with the plethoric, soft movement of a subsiding pillow. The puckers of his cumbrous eyelids drew a little closer together; his bilious eyes peered out cautiously between them, like sallow assassins watching through curtained windows; for a minute or so he kept up what might without hyperbole be called a devil of a thinking.

"I've got it," he broke out at last. "Dicker, I want you to bring in a bill to make Fastburg the only capital."

"What is the use?" asked the legislator, looking more disconsolate, more hopeless than ever. "Slowburg will oppose it and beat it."

"Never you mind," persisted Mr. Pullwool. "You bring in your little bill and stand up for it like a man. There's money in it. You don't see it? Well, I do; I'm used to seeing money in things; and in this case I see it plain. As sure as whiskey is whiskey, there's money in it."

Mr. Pullwool's usually dull and, so to speak, extinct countenance was fairly alight and aflame with exultation. It was almost a wonder that his tallowy person did not gutter beneath the blaze, like an over-fat candle under the flaring of a wick too large for it.

"Well, I'll bring in the bill," agreed Mr. Dicker, catching the enthusiasm of his counsellor and shaking off his lethargy. He perceived a dim promise of fees, and at the sight his load of despondency dropped away from him, as Christian's burden loosened in presence of the cross. He looked a little like the confident, resolute Tom Dicker, who twenty years before had graduated from college the brightest, bravest, most eloquent fellow in his class, and the one who seemed to have before him the finest future.

"Snacks!" said Mr. Pullwool.

At this brazen word Mr. Dicker's countenance

fell again ; he was ashamed to talk so frankly about plundering his fellow-citizens ; " a little grain of conscience turned him sour."

" I will take pay for whatever I can do as a lawyer," he stammered.

" Get out !" laughed the Satanic one. " You just take all there is a-going ! You need it bad enough. I know when a man's hard up. I know the signs. I've been as bad off as you ; had to look all ways for five dollars ; had to play second fiddle and say thanky. But what I offer you ain't a second fiddle. It's as good a chance as my own. Even divides. One half to you and one half to me. You know the people and I know the ropes. It's a fair bargain. What do you say ?"

Mr. Dicker thought of his decayed practice and his unpaid bills ; and flipping overboard his little grain of conscience, he said, " Snacks."

" All right," grinned Pullwool, his teeth gleaming alarmingly. " Word of a gentleman," he added, extending his pulpy hand, loaded with ostentatious rings, and grasping Dicker's recoiling fingers. " Harness up your little bill as quick as you can, and drive it like Jehu. Fastburg to be the only capital. Slowburg no claims at all, historical, geographical, or economic. The old arrangement a humbug ; as inconvenient as a fifth wheel of a coach ; costs the State thousands of greenbacks every year. Figure it all up statistically and dab it over with your shiniest rhetoric and make a big thing of it

every way. That's what you've got to do ; that's your little biz. I'll tend to the rest."

"I don't quite see where the money is to come from," observed Mr. Dicker.

"Leave that to me," said the veteran of the lobbies ; "my name is Pullwool, and I know how to pull the wool over men's eyes, and then I know how to get at their britches-pockets. You bring in your bill and make your speech. Will you do it?"

"Yes," answered Dicker, bolting all scruples in another half tumbler of brandy.

He kept his word. As promptly as parliamentary forms and mysteries would allow, there was a bill under the astonished noses of honorable lawgivers, removing the seat of legislation from Slowburg and centring it in Fastburg. This bill Mr. Thomas Dicker supported with that fluency and fiery enthusiasm of oratory which had for a time enabled him to show as the foremost man of his State. Great was the excitement, great the rejoicing and anger. The press of Fastburg sent forth shrieks of exultation, and the press of Slowburg responded with growlings of disgust. The two capitals and the two geographical sections which they represented were ready to fire Parrott guns at each other, without regard to life and property in the adjoining regions of the earth. If there was a citizen of the little Commonwealth who did not hear of this bill and did not talk of it, it was because that citizen was as deaf as a post and as dumb as an oyster. Ordinary political distinctions were forgotten, and the old

party-whips could not manage their very wheel-horses, who went snorting and kicking over the traces in all directions. In short, both in the legislature and out of it, nothing was thought of but the question of the removal of the capital.

Among the loudest of the agitators was Mr. Pullwool ; not that he cared one straw whether the capital went to Fastburg, or to Slowburg, or to Ballyhack ; but for the money which he thought he saw in the agitation he did care mightily, and to get that money he labored with a zeal which was not of this world alone. At the table of his hotel, and in the barroom of the same institution, and in the lobbies of the legislative hall, and in editorial sanctums and barbers' shops, and all other nooks of gossip, he trumpeted the claims of Fastburg as if that little city were the New Jerusalem and deserved to be the metropolis of the sidereal universe. All sorts of trickeries, too ; he sent spurious telegrams and got fictitious items into the newspapers ; he lied through every medium known to the highest civilization. Great surely was his success, for the row which he raised was tremendous. But a row alone was not enough ; it was the mere breeze upon the surface of the waters ; the treasure-ship below was still to be drawn up and gutted.

"It will cost money," he whispered confidentially to capitalists and land-owners. "We must have the sinews of war, or we can't carry it on. There's your city lots goin' to double in value if this bill

goes through. What per cent will you pay on the advance? That's the question. Put your hands in your pockets and pull 'em out full, and put back ten times as much. It's a sure investment; warranted to yield a hundred per cent; the safest and biggest thing agoing."

Capitalists and land-owners and merchants hearkened and believed and subscribed. The slyest old hunks in Fastburg put a faltering forefinger into his long pocket-book, touched a greenback which had been laid away there as neatly as a corpse in its coffin, and resurrected it for the use of Mr. Pullwool. By tens, by twenties, by fifties, and by hundreds the dollars of the ambitious citizens of the little metropolis were charmed into the portemonnaie of this rattlesnake of a lobbyist.

"I never saw a greener set," chuckled Pullwool. "By jiminy, I believe they'd shell out for a bill to make their town a seaport, if it was a hundred miles from a drop of water."

But he was not content with individual subscriptions, and conscientiously scorned himself until he had got at the city treasury.

"The corporation must pony up," he insisted, with the mayor. "This bill is just shaking in the wind for lack of money. Fastburg must come down with the dust. You ought to see to it. What are you chief magistrate for? Ain't it to tend to the welfare of the city? Look here, now; you call the common council together; secret session, you understand. You call 'em together and let me talk

to 'em. I want to make the loons comprehend that it's their duty to vote something handsome for this measure."

The mayor hummed and hawed one way, and then he hawed and hummed the other way, and the result was that he granted the request. There was a secret session in the council-room, with his honor at the top of the long green table, with a row of more or less respectable functionaries on either side of it, and with Mr. Pullwool and the Devil at the bottom. Of course it is not to be supposed that this last-named personage was visible to the others, or that they had more than a vague suspicion of his presence. Had he fully revealed himself, had he plainly exhibited his horns and hoofs, or even so much as uncorked his perfume-bottle of brimstone, it is more than probable that the city authorities would have been exceedingly scandalized, and they might have adjourned the session. As it was, seeing nothing more disagreeable than the obese form of the lobbyist, they listened calmly while he unfolded his project.

Mr. Pullwool spoke at length, and to Fastburg ears eloquently. Fastburg must be the sole capital ; it had every claim, historical, geographical, and commercial, to that distinction ; it ought, could, would, and should be the sole capital ; that was about the substance of his exordium.

"But, gentlemen, it will cost," he went on. "There is an unscrupulous and furious opposition to the measure. The other side—those fellows from

Slowburg and vicinity—are putting their hands into their britches-pockets. You must put your hands into yours. The thing will be worth millions to Fastburg. But it will cost thousands. Are you ready to fork over? *Are you ready?*”

“What’s the figure?” asked one of the councilmen. “What do you estimate?”

“Gentlemen, I shall astonish *some* of you,” answered Mr. Pullwool, cunningly. It was well put; it was as much as to say, “I shall astonish the green ones; of course the really strong heads among you won’t be in the least bothered.” “I estimate,” he continued, “that the city treasury will have to put up a good round sum, say a hundred thousand dollars, be it more or less.”

A murmur of surprise, of chagrin, and of something like indignation ran along the line of official mustaches. “Nonsense,” “The dickens,” “Can’t be done,” “We can’t think of it,” broke out several councilmen, in a distinctly unparliamentary manner.

“Gentlemen, one moment,” pleaded Pullwool, passing his greasy smile around the company, as though it were some kind of refreshment. “Look at the whole job; it’s a big job. We must have lawyers; we must have newspapers in all parts of the State; we must have writers to work up the historical claims of the city; we must have fellows to buttonhole honorable members; we must have fees for honorable members themselves. How can you do it for less?”

Then he showed a schedule ; so much to this wire-puller and that and the other ; so much apiece to so many able editors ; so much for eminent legal counsel ; finally, a trifle for himself. And one hundred thousand dollars or thereabouts was what the schedule footed up, turn it whichever way you would.

Of course this common council of Fastburg did not dare to vote such a sum for such a purpose. Mr. Pullwool had not expected that it would ; all that he had hoped for was the half of it ; but that half he got.

"Did they do it?" breathlessly inquired Tom Dicker of him, when he returned to the hotel.

"They done it," calmly, yet triumphantly, responded Mr. Pullwool.

"Thunder !" exclaimed the amazed Dicker. "You are the most extraordinary man ! You must have the very Devil in you !"

Instead of being startled by this alarming supposition, Mr. Pullwool looked gratified. People thus possessed generally do look gratified when the possession is alluded to.

But the inspired lobbyist did not pass his time in wearing an aspect of satisfaction. When there was money to get and to spend he could run his fat off almost as fast as if he were pouring it into candle-moulds. The ring—the famous capital ring of Fastburg—must be seen to, its fingers greased, and its energy quickened. Before he rolled his apple-dumpling of a figure into bed that night he

had interviewed Smith and Brown the editors, Jones and Robinson the lawyers, Smooth and Slow the literary characters, various lobbyists, and various lawgivers.

“Work, gentlemen, and capitalize Fastburg and get your dividends,” was his inspiring message to one and all. He promised Smith and Brown ten dollars for every editorial, and five dollars for every humbugging telegram, and two dollars for every telling item. Jones and Robinson were to have five hundred dollars apiece for concurrent legal statements of the claim of the city; Smooth and Slow, as being merely authors and so not accustomed to obtain much for their labor, got a hundred dollars between them for working up the case historically. To the lobbyists and members Pullwool was munificent; it seemed as if those gentlemen could not be paid enough for their “influence;” as if they alone had that kind of time which is money. Only, while dealing liberally with them, the inspired one did not forget himself. A thousand for Mr. Sly; yes, Mr. Sly was to receipt for a thousand; but he must let half of it stick to the Pullwool fingers. The same arrangement was made with Mr. Green and Mr. Sharp and Mr. Bummer and Mr. Pickpurse and Mr. Buncombe. It was a game of snacks, half to you and half to me; and sometimes it was more than snacks,—a thousand for you two and a thousand for me too.

With such a greasing of the wheels, you may imagine that the machinery of the ring worked to

a charm. In the city and in the legislature and throughout the State there was the liveliest buzzing and humming and clicking of political wheels and cranks and cogs that had ever been known in those hitherto pastoral localities. The case of Fastburg against Slowburg was put in a hundred ways, and proved as sure as it was put. It really seemed to the eager burghers as if they already heard the clink of hammers on a new State-House and beheld a perpetual legislature sitting on their fences and curbstones until the edifice should be finished. The great wire-puller and his gang of stipendiaries were the objects of popular gratitude and adoration. The landlord of the hotel which Mr. Pullwool patronized actually would not take pay for that gentleman's board.

"No, sir!" declared this simple Boniface, turning crimson with enthusiasm. "You are going to put thousands of dollars into my purse, and I'll take nothing out of yours. And any little thing in the way of cigars and whiskey that you want, sir, why, call for it. It's my treat, sir."

"Thank you, sir," kindly smiled the great man. "That's what I call the square thing. Mr. Boniface, you are a gentleman and a scholar; and I'll mention your admirable house to my friends. By the way, I shall have to leave you for a few days."

"Going to leave us!" exclaimed Mr. Boniface, aghast. "I hope not till this job is put through."

"I must run about a bit," muttered Pullwool,

confidentially. "A little turn through the State, you understand, to stir up the country districts. Some of the members ain't as hot as they should be, and I want to set their constituents after them. Nothing like getting on a few deputations."

"Oh, exactly!" chuckled Mr. Boniface, ramming his hands into his pockets and cheerfully jingling a bunch of keys and a penknife for lack of silver. It was strange indeed that he should actually see the Devil in Mr. Pullwool's eye and should not have a suspicion that he was in danger of being humbugged by him. "And your rooms?" he suggested. "How about them?"

"I keep them," replied the lobbyist, grandly, as if blaspheming the expense—to Boniface. "Our friends must have a little hole to meet in. And while you are about it, Mr. Boniface, see that they get something to drink and smoke; and we'll settle it between us."

"Pre—cisely!" laughed the landlord, as much as to say, "My treat!"

And so Mr. Pullwool, that Pericles and Lorenzo de' Medici rolled in one, departed for a season from the city which he ruled and blessed. Did he run about the State and preach and crusade in behalf of Fastburg, and stir up the bucolic populations to stir up their representatives in its favor? Not a bit of it; the place that he went to and the only place that he went to was Slowburg; yes, covering up his tracks in his usual careful style, he made direct for the rival of Fastburg. What did he propose to

do there? Oh, how can we reveal the whole duplicity and turpitude of Ananias Pullwool? The subject is too vast for a merely human pen; it requires the literary ability of a recording angel. Well, we must get our feeble lever under this boulder of wickedness as we can, and do our faint best to expose all the reptiles and slimy things beneath it.

The first person whom this apostle of lobbyism called upon in Slowburg was the mayor of that tottering capital.

"My name is Pullwool," he said to the official, and he said it with an almost enviable ease of impudence, for he was used to introducing himself to people who despised and detested him. "I want to see you confidentially about this capital ring which is making so much trouble."

"I thought you were in it," replied the mayor, turning very red in the face, for he had heard of Mr. Pullwool as the leader of said ring; and being an iracund man, he was ready to knock his head off.

"In it!" exclaimed the possessed one. "I wish I was. It's a fat thing. More than fifty thousand dollars paid out already!"

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the mayor in despair.

"By the way, this is between ourselves," added Pullwool. "You take it so, I hope. Word of honor, eh?"

"Why, if you have anything to communicate that will help us, why, of course, I promise se-

crecy," stammered the mayor. "Yes, certainly ; word of honor."

"Well, I've been looking about among those fellows a little," continued Ananias. "I've kept my eyes and ears open. It's a way I have. And I've learned a thing or two that it will be to your advantage to know. Yes, sir ! fifty thousand dollars !—the city has voted it and paid it, and the ring has got it. That's why they are all working so. And depend upon it, they'll carry the legislature and turn Slowburg out to grass, unless you wake up and do something."

"By heavens !" exclaimed the iracund mayor, turning red again. "It's a piece of confounded rascality. It ought to be exposed."

"No, don't expose it," put in Mr. Pullwool, somewhat alarmed. "That game never works. Of course they'd deny it and swear you down, for bribing witnesses is as easy as bribing members. I'll tell you what to do. Beat them at their own weapons. Raise a purse that will swamp theirs. That's the way the world goes. It's an auction. The highest bidder gets the article."

Well, the result of it all was that the city magnates of Slowburg did just what had been done by the city magnates of Fastburg, only, instead of voting fifty thousand dollars into the pockets of the ring, they voted sixty thousand. With a portion of this money about him, and with authority to draw for the rest on proper vouchers, Mr. Pullwool, his tongue in his cheek, bade farewell to

his new allies. As a further proof of the ready wit and solid impudence of this sublime politician and model of American statesmen, let me here introduce a brief anecdote. Leaving Slowburg by the cars, he encountered a gentleman from Fastburg, who saluted him with tokens of amazement, and said, "What are you doing here, Mr. Pullwool?"

"Oh, just breaking up these fellows a little," whispered the man with the Devil in him. "They were making too strong a fight. I had to *see* some of them," putting one hand behind his back and rubbing his fingers together, to signify that there had been a taking of bribes. "But be shady about it. For the sake of the good cause, keep quiet. Mum's the word."

The reader can imagine how briskly the fight between the two capitals reopened when Mr. Pullwool re-entered the lobby. Slowburg now had its adherents, and they struggled like men who saw money in their warfare, and they struggled not in vain. To cut a very long story very short, to sum the whole of an exciting drama in one sentence, the legislature kicked overboard the bill to make Fastburg the sole seat of government. Nothing had come of the whole row, except that a pair of simple little cities had spent over one hundred thousand dollars, and that the capital ring, fighting on both sides and drawing pay from both sides, had lined its pockets, while the great creator of the ring had crammed his to bursting.

"What does this mean, Mr. Pullwool?" de-

manded the partially honest and entirely puzzled Tom Dicker, when he had discovered by an unofficial count of noses how things were going. "Fastburg has spent all its money for nothing. It won't be sole capital, after all."

"I never expected it would be," replied Pullwool, so tickled by the Devil that was in him that he could not help laughing. "I never wanted it to be. Why, it would spoil the little game. This is a trick that can be played every year."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Dicker, and was dumb with astonishment for a minute.

"Didn't you see through it before?" grinned the grand master of all guile and subtlety.

"I did not," confessed Mr. Dicker, with a mixture of shame and abhorrence. "Well," he presently added, recovering himself, "shall we settle?"

"Oh, certainly, if you are ready," smiled Pullwool, with the air of a man who has something coming to him.

"And what, exactly, will be my share?" asked Dicker, humbly.

"What do you mean?" stared Pullwool, apparently in the extremity of amazement.

"You said *snacks*, didn't you?" urged Dicker, trembling violently.

"Well, *snacks* it is," replied Pullwool. "Haven't you had a thousand?"

"Yes," admitted Dicker.

"Then you owe me five hundred?"

Mr. Dicker did not faint, though he came very

near it, but he staggered out of the room as white as a sheet, for he was utterly crushed by this diabolical impudence.

That very day Mr. Pullwool left for Washington, and the Devil left for *his* place, each of them sure to find the other when he wanted him, if indeed their roads lay apart.

LOST IN THE FOG.

BY NOAH BROOKS.

“**D**OWN with your helm ! you’ll have us hard and fast aground !”

My acquaintance with Captain Booden was at that time somewhat limited, and if possible I knew less of the difficult and narrow exit from Bolinas Bay than I did of Captain Booden. So with great trepidation I jammed the helm hard down, and the obedient little Lively Polly fell off easily, and we were over the bar and gliding gently along under the steep bluff of the Mesa, whose rocky edge, rising sheer from the beach and crowned with dry grass, rose far above the pennon of the little schooner. I did not intend to deceive Captain Booden, but being anxious to work my way down to San Francisco, I had shipped as “able seaman” on the Lively Polly, though it was a long day since I had handled a foresheet or anything bigger than

the little plungers which hover about Bolinas Bay; and latterly I had been ranching it at Point Reyes, so what could I know about the bar and the shoals of the harbor, I would like to know? We had glided out of the narrow channel which is skirted on one side by a long sandspit that curves around and makes the southern and western shelter of the bay, and on the other side by a huge elevated tongue of table-land, called by the inhabitants thereabouts the Mesa. High, precipitous, perpendicular, level, and dotted with farm-houses, this singular bit of land stretches several miles out southward to sea, bordered with a rocky beach, and tapered off into the wide ocean with Duxbury Reef—a dangerous rocky reef, curving down to the southward and almost always white with foam, save when the sea is calm, and then the great lazy green waves eddy noiselessly over the half-hidden rocks, or slip like oil over the dreadful dangers which they hide.

Behind us was the lovely bay of Bolinas, blue and sparkling in the summer afternoon sun, its borders dotted with thrifty ranches, and the woody ravines and bristling Tamalpais Range rising over all. The tide was running out, and only a peaceful swash whispered along the level sandy beach on our left, where the busy sandpiper chased the playful wave as it softly rose and fell along the shore. On the higher centre of the sandspit which shuts in the bay on that side, a row of ashy-colored gulls sunned themselves, and blinked at us sleepily as we drifted slowly out of the channel, our breeze cut off by the

Mesa that hemmed us in on the right. I have told you that I did not much pretend to seamanship, but I was not sorry that I had taken passage on the *Lively Polly*, for there is always something novel and fascinating to me in coasting a region which I have heretofore known only by its hills, cañons, and sea-beaches. The trip is usually made from Bolinas Bay to San Francisco in five or six hours, when wind and tide favor; and I could bear being knocked about by Captain Booden for that length of time, especially as there was one other hand on board—"Lanky" he was called—but whether a foremast hand or landsman I do not know. He had been teaching school at Jaybird Cañon, and was a little more awkward with the running rigging of the *Lively Polly* than I was. Captain Booden was, therefore, the main reliance of the little twenty-ton schooner, and if her deck-load of firewood and cargo of butter and eggs ever reached a market, the skilful and profane skipper should have all the credit thereof.

The wind died away, and the sea, before ruffled with a wholesale breeze, grew as calm as a sheet of billowy glass, heaving only in long, gentle undulations on which the sinking sun bestowed a green and golden glory, dimmed only by the white fog-bank that came drifting slowly up from the *Farra-lones*, now shut out from view by the lovely haze. Captain Booden gazed morosely on the western horizon, and swore by a big round oath that we should not have a capful of wind if that fog-bank did not lift. But we were fairly out of the bay;

the Mesa was lessening in the distance, and as we drifted slowly southward the red-roofed buildings on its level rim grew to look like toy-houses, and we heard the dull moan of the ebb-tide on Duxbury Reef on our starboard bow. The sea grew dead calm and the wind fell quite away, but still we drifted southward, passing Rocky Point and peering curiously into Pilot Boat Cove, which looked so strangely unfamiliar to me from the sea, though I had fished in its trout-brooks many a day, and had hauled driftwood from the rocky beach to Johnson's ranch in times gone by. The tide turned after sundown, and Captain Booden thought we ought to get a bit of wind then ; but it did not come, and the fog crept up and up the glassy sea, rolling in huge wreaths of mist, shutting out the surface of the water, and finally the gray rocks of North Heads were hidden, and little by little the shore was curtained from our view and we were becalmed in the fog.

To say that the skipper swore would hardly describe his case. He cursed his luck, his stars, his foretop, his main hatch, his blasted foolishness, his lubberly crew—Lanky and I—and a variety of other persons and things ; but all to no avail. Night came on, and the light on North Heads gleamed at us with a sickly eye through the deepening fog. We had a bit of luncheon with us, but no fire, and were fain to content ourselves with cold meat, bread, and water, hoping that a warm breakfast in San Francisco would make some amends for our present

short rations. But the night wore on, and we were still tumbling about in the rising sea without wind enough to fill our sails, a rayless sky overhead, and with breakers continually under our lee. Once we saw lights on shore, and heard the sullen thud of rollers that smote against the rocks; it was aggravating, as the fog lifted for a space, to see the cheerful windows of the Cliff House, and almost hear the merry calls of pleasure-seekers as they muffled themselves in their wraps and drove gayly up the hill, reckless of the poor homeless mariners who were drifting comfortlessly about so near the shore they could not reach. We got out the sweeps and rowed lustily for several hours, steering by the compass and taking our bearings from the cliff.

But we lost our bearings in the maze of currents in which we soon found ourselves, and the dim shore melted away in the thickening fog. To add to our difficulties, Captain Booden put his head most frequently into the cuddy; and when it emerged, he smelt dreadfully of gin. Lanky and I held a secret council, in which we agreed, in case he became intoxicated, we would rise up in mutiny and work the vessel on our own account. He shortly "lost his head," as Lanky phrased it; and slipping down on the deck, went quietly into the sleep of the gin-drunken. At four o'clock in the morning the gray fog grew grayer with the early dawning; and as I gazed with weary eyes into the vague unknown that shut us in, Booden roused him from his booze, and seizing the tiller from my

hand, bawled: "'Bout ship, you swab! we're on the Farralones!" And sure enough, there loomed right under our starboard quarter a group of conical rocks, steeply rising from the restless blue sea. Their wild white sides were crowded with chattering sea-fowl; and far above, like a faint nimbus in the sky, shone the feeble rays of the lighthouse lantern, now almost quenched by the dull gleam of day that crept up from the water. The helm was jammed hard down. There was no time to get out sweeps; but still drifting helplessly, we barely grazed the bare rocks of the islet, and swung clear, slinking once more into the gloom.

Our scanty stock of provisions and water was gone; but there was no danger of starvation, for the generous product of the henneries and dairies of Bolinas filled the vessel's hold—albeit raw eggs and butter without bread might only serve as a barrier against famine. So we drifted and tumbled about—still no wind and no sign of the lifting of the fog. Once in a while it would roll upward and show a long, flat expanse of water, tempting us to believe that the blessed sky was coming out at last; but soon the veil fell again, and we aimlessly wondered where we were and whither we were drifting. There is something awful and mysterious in the shadowy nothingness that surrounds one in a fog at sea. You fancy that out of that impenetrable mist may suddenly burst some great disaster or danger. Strange shapes appear to be forming themselves in the obscurity out of which they emerge,

and the eye is wearied beyond expression with looking into a vacuity which continually promises to evolve into something, but never does.

Thus idly drifting, we heard, first, the creaking of a block, then a faint wash of sea; and out of the white depths of the fog came the bulky hull of a full-rigged ship. Her sails were set, but she made scarcely steerage way. Her rusty sides and general look bespoke a long voyage just concluding; and we found on hailing her that she was the British ship *Marathon*, from Calcutta for San Francisco. We boarded the *Marathon*, though almost in sight of our own port, with something of the feeling that shipwrecked seamen may have when they reach land. It was odd that we, lost and wandering as we were, should be thus encountered in the vast unknown where we were drifting by a strange ship; and though scarcely two hours' sail from home, should be supplied with bread and water by a Britisher from the Indies. We gave them all the information we had about the pilots, whom we wanted so much to meet ourselves; and after following slowly for a few hours by the huge side of our strange friend, parted company—the black hull and huge spars of the Indiaman gradually lessening in the mist that shut her from our view. We had touched a chord that bound us to our fellow-men but it was drawn from our hands; and the unfathomable abyss in which we floated had swallowed up each human trace, except what was comprised on the contracted deck of the *Lively Polly*, where Cap-

tain Booden sat glumly whittling, and Lanky meditatively peered after the disappeared Marathon, as though his soul and all his hopes had gone with her. The deck, with its load of cord-wood ; the sails and rigging ; the sliding-hutch of the little cuddy ; and all the features of the Lively Polly, but yesterday so unfamiliar, were now as odiously wearisome as though I had known them for a century. It seemed as if I had never known any other place.

All that day we floated aimlessly along, moved only by the sluggish currents, which shifted occasionally, but generally bore us westward and southward ; not a breath of wind arose, and our sails were as useless as though we had been on dry land. Night came on again, and found us still entirely without reckoning and as completely "at sea" as ever before. To add to our discomfort, a drizzling rain, unusual for the season of the year, set in, and we cowered on the wet deck-load, more than ever disgusted with each other and the world. During the night a big ocean steamer came plunging and crashing through the darkness, her lights gleaming redly through the dense medium as she cautiously felt her way past us, falling off a few points as she heard our hail. We lay right in her path, but with tin horns and a wild Indian yell from the versatile Lanky managed to make ourselves heard, and the mysterious stranger disappeared in the fog as suddenly as she had come, and we were once more alone in the darkness.

The night wore slowly away, and we made out

to catch a few hours' sleep, standing "watch and watch" with each other of our slender crew. Day dawned again, and we broke our fast with the last of the Marathon's biscuit, having "broken cargo" to eke out our cold repast with some of the Bolinas butter and eggs which we were taking to a most unexpected market.

Suddenly, about six o'clock in the morning, we heard the sound of breakers ahead, and above the sullen roar of the surf I distinctly heard the tinklings of a bell. We got out our sweeps and had commenced to row wearily once more, when the fog lifted and before us lay the blessed land. A high range of sparsely wooded hills, crowned with rocky ledges, and with abrupt slopes covered with dry brown grass, running to the water's edge, formed the background of the picture. Nearer, a tongue of high land, brushy and rocky, made out from the main shore, and curving southward, formed a shelter to what seemed a harbor within. Against the precipitous point the sea broke with a heavy blow, and a few ugly peaks of rock lifted their heads above the heaving green of the sea. High up above the sky-line rose one tall, sharp, blue peak, yet veiled in the floating mist, but its base melted away into a mass of verdure that stretched from the shore far up the mountain-side. Our sweeps were now used to bring us around the point, and cautiously pulling in, we opened a lovely bay bordered with orchards and vineyards, in the midst of which was a neat village, glittering white in the sunshine, and

clustered around an old-fashioned mission church, whose quaint gable and tower reminded us of the buildings of the early Spanish settlers of the country. As we neared the shore (there was no landing-place) we could see an unwonted commotion in the clean streets, and a flag was run up to the top of a white staff that stood in the midst of a plaza. Captain Booden returned the compliment by hoisting the Stars and Stripes at our mainmast head, but was sorely bothered with the mingled dyes of the flag on shore. A puff of air blew out its folds, and to our surprise disclosed the Mexican national standard.

"Blast them greasers," said the patriotic skipper, "if they ain't gone and histed a Mexican cactus flag, then I'm blowed." He seriously thought of hauling down his beloved national colors again, resenting the insult of hoisting a foreign flag on American soil. He pocketed the affront, however, remarking that "they probably knew that a Bolinas butter-boat was not much of a fightist anyway."

We dropped anchor gladly, Captain Booden being wholly at a loss as to our whereabouts. We judged that we were somewhere south of the Golden Gate, but what town this was that slept so tranquilly in the summer sun, and what hills were these that walled in the peaceful scene from the rest of the world, we could not tell. The village seemed awakening from its serene sleepiness, and one by one the windows of the adobe cottages swung open as if the people rubbed their long-closed eyes at some un-

wonted sight ; and the doors gradually opened as though their dumb lips would hail us and ask who were these strangers that vexed the quiet waters of their bay. But two small fishing-boats lay at anchor, and these Booden said reminded him of Christopher Columbus or Noah's Ark, they were so clumsy and antique in build.

We hauled our boat up alongside, and all hands got in and went ashore. As we landed, a little shudder seemed to go through the sleepy old place, as if it had been rudely disturbed from its comfortable nap, and a sudden sob of sea air swept through the quiet streets as though the insensate houses had actually breathed the weary sigh of awaking. The buildings were low and white, with dark-skinned children basking in the doors, and grass hammocks swinging beneath open verandas. There were no stores, no sign of business, and no sound of vehicles or labor ; all was as decorous and quiet, to use the skipper's description, "as if the people had slicked up their door-yards, whitewashed their houses, and gone to bed." It was just like a New England Sabbath in a Mexican village.

And this fancy was further colored by a strange procession which now met us as we went up from the narrow beach, having first made fast our boat. A lean Mexican priest, with an enormous shovel hat and particularly shabby cassock, came toward us, followed by a motley crowd of Mexicans, prominent among whom was a pompous old man clad in a seedy Mexican uniform and wearing a trailing

rapier at his side. The rest of the procession was brought up with a crowd of shy women, dark-eyed and tawny and all poorly clad, though otherwise comfortable enough in condition. These hung back and wonderingly looked at the strange faces, as though they had never seen the like before. The old padre lifted his skinny hands, and said something in Spanish which I did not understand.

"Why, the old mummy is slinging his popish blessings at us!" This was Lanky's interpretation of the kindly priest's paternal salutation. And, sure enough, he was welcoming us to the shore of San Ildefonso with holy fervor and religious phrase.

"I say," said Booden, a little testily, "what did you say was the name of this place, and where away does it lay from 'Frisco?" In very choice Castilian, as Lanky declared, the priest rejoined that he did not understand the language in which Booden was speaking. "Then bring on somebody that does," rejoined that irreverent mariner, when due interpretation had been made. The padre protested that no one in the village understood the English tongue. The skipper gave a long low whistle of suppressed astonishment, and wondered if we had drifted down to Lower California in two days and nights, and had struck a Mexican settlement. The colors on the flagstaff and the absence of any Americans gave some show of reason to this startling conclusion; and Lanky, who was now the interpreter of the party, asked the name of the place, and was again told that it was San Ildefonso; but

when he asked what country it was in and how far it was to San Francisco, he was met with a polite "I do not understand you, Señor." Here was a puzzle : becalmed in a strange port only two days drift from the city of San Francisco ; a town which the schoolmaster declared was not laid down on any map ; a population that spoke only Spanish and did not know English when they heard it ; a Mexican flag flying over the town, and an educated priest who did not know what we meant when we asked how far it was to San Francisco. Were we bewitched ?

Accepting a hospitable invitation from the padre, we sauntered up to the plaza, where we were ushered into a long, low room, which might once have been a military barrack-room. It was neatly whitewashed and had a hard clay floor, and along the walls were a few ancient firelocks and a venerable picture of "His Excellency, General Santa Aña, President of the Republic of Mexico," as a legend beneath it set forth. Breakfast of chickens, vegetables, bread, and an excellent sort of country wine (this last being served in a big earthen bottle) was served up to us on the long unpainted table that stood in the middle of the room. During the repast our host, the priest, sat with folded hands intently regarding us, while the rest of the people clustered around the door and open windows, eying us with indescribable and incomprehensible curiosity. If we had been visitors from the moon we could not have attracted more attention. Even the stolid Indians, a few of whom strolled lazily

about, came and gazed at us until the pompous old man in faded Mexican uniform drove them noisily away from the window, where they shut out the light and the pleasant morning air, perfumed with heliotropes, verbenas, and sweet herbs that grew luxuriantly about the houses.

The padre had restrained his curiosity out of rigid politeness until we had eaten, when he began by asking, "Did our galleon come from Manila?" We told him that we only came from Bolinas; whereat he said once more, with a puzzled look of pain, "I do not understand you, Señor." Then pointing through the open doorway to where the Lively Polly peacefully floated at anchor, he asked what ensign was that which floated at her masthead. Lanky proudly, but with some astonishment, replied: "That's the American flag, Señor." At this the seedy old man in uniform eagerly said: "Americanos! Americanos! why, I saw some of those people and that flag at Monterey." Lanky asked him if Monterey was not full of Americans, and did not have plenty of flags. The Ancient replied that he did not know; it was a long time since he had been there. Lanky observed that perhaps he had never been there. "I was there in 1835," said the Ancient. This curious speech being interpreted to Captain Booden, that worthy remarked that he did not believe that he had seen a white man since.

After an ineffectual effort to explain to the company where Bolinas was, we rose and went out for a view of the town. It was beautifully situated on

a gentle rise which swelled up from the water's edge and fell rapidly off in the rear of the town into a deep ravine, where a brawling mountain stream supplied a little flouring-mill with motive power. Beyond the ravine were small fields of grain, beans and lentils on the rolling slopes, and back of these rose the dark, dense vegetation of low hills, while over all were the rough and ragged ridges of mountains closing in all the scene. The town itself, as I have said, was white and clean; the houses were low-browed, with windows secured by wooden shutters, only a few glazed sashes being seen anywhere. Out of these openings in the thick adobe walls of the humble homes of the villagers flashed the curious, the abashed glances of many a dark-eyed senorita, who fled, laughing, as we approached. The old church was on the plaza, and in its odd-shaped turret tinkled the little bell whose notes had sounded the morning angelus when we were knocking about in the fog outside. High up on its quaintly arched gable was inscribed in antique letters "1796." In reply to a sceptical remark from Lanky, Booden declared that "the old shell looked as though it might have been built in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, for that matter." The worthy skipper had a misty idea that all old Spanish buildings were built in the days of these famous sovereigns.

Hearing the names of Ferdinand and Isabella, the padre gravely and reverentially asked: "And is the health of His Excellency, General Santa Aña, whom God protect, still continued to him?"

With great amazement, Lanky replied : " Santa Aña ! why, the last heard of him was that he was keeping a cockpit in Havana ; some of the newspapers published an obituary of him about six months ago, but I believe he is alive yet somewhere."

A little flush of indignation mantled the old man's cheek, and with a tinge of severity in his voice he said : " I have heard that shameful scandal about our noble President once before, but you must excuse me if I ask you not to repeat it. It is true he took away our Pious Fund some years since, but he is still our revered President, and I would not hear him ill-spoken of any more than our puissant and mighty Ferdinand, of whom you just spoke—may he rest in glory !" and here the good priest crossed himself devoutly.

" What is the old priest jabbering about ?" asked Captain Booden, impatiently ; for he was in haste to " get his bearings" and be off. When Lanky replied, he burst out : " Tell him that Santa Aña is not President of Mexico any more than I am, and that he hasn't amounted to a row of pins since California was part of the United States."

Lanky faithfully interpreted this fling at the ex-President, whereupon the padre, motioning to the Ancient to put up his rapier, which had leaped out of its rusty scabbard, said : " Nay, Señor, you would insult an old man. We have never been told yet by our government that the Province of California was alienated from the great Republic of Mexico, and we owe allegiance to none save the nation whose

flag we love so well ;” and the old man turned his tear-dimmed eyes toward the ragged standard of Mexico that drooped from the staff in the plaza. Continuing, he said : “ Our noble country has strangely forgotten us, and though we watch the harbor-entrance year after year, no tidings ever comes. The galleon that was to bring us stores has never been seen on the horizon yet, and we seem lost in the fog.”

The schoolmaster of Jaybird Cañon managed to tell us what the priest had said, and then asked when he had last heard of the outside world. “ It was in 1837,” said he, sadly, “ when we sent a courier to the Mission del Carmelo, at Monterey, for tidings from New Spain. He never came back, and the great earthquake which shook the country hereabout opened a huge chasm across the country just back of the Sierra yonder, and none dared to cross over to the main land. The saints have defended us in peace, and it is the will of Heaven that we shall stay here by ourselves until the Holy Virgin, in answer to our prayers, shall send us deliverance.”

Here was a new revelation. This was an old Spanish Catholic mission, settled in 1796, called San Ildefonso, which had evidently been overlooked for nearly forty years, and had quietly slept in an unknown solitude while the country had been transferred to the United States from the flag that still idly waved over it. Lost in the fog ! Here was a whole town lost in a fog of years. Empires

and dynasties had risen and fallen ; the world had repeatedly been shaken to its centre, and this people had heeded it not ; a great civil war had ravaged the country to which they now belonged, and they knew not of it ; poor Mexico herself had been torn with dissensions and had been insulted with an empire, and these peaceful and weary watchers for tidings from "New Spain" had recked nothing of all these things. All around them the busy State of California was scarred with the eager pick of gold-seekers or the shining share of the husbandman ; towns and cities had sprung up where these patriarchs had only known of vast cattle ranges or sleepy missions of the Roman Catholic Fathers. They knew nothing of the great city of San Francisco, with its busy marts and crowded harbor ; and thought of its broad bay—if they thought of it at all—as the lovely shore of Yerba Buena, bounded by bleak hills and almost unvexed by any keel. The political storms of forty years had gone hurtless over their heads, and in a certain sort of dreamless sleep San Ildefonso had still remained true to the red, white, and green flag that had long since disappeared from every part of the State save here, where it was still loved and revered as the banner of the soil.

The social and political framework of the town had been kept up through all these years. There had been no connection with the fountain of political power, but the town was ruled by the legally elected *Ayuntamiento*, or Common Council, of which the

Ancient, Señor Apolonario Maldonado, was President or Alcade. They were daily looking for advices from Don José Castro, Governor of the loyal province of California; and so they had been looking daily for forty years. We asked if they had not heard from any of the prying Yankees who crowd the country. Father Ignacio—for that was the padre's name—replied: "Yes; five years ago, when the winter rains had just set in, a tall, spare man, who talked some French and some Spanish, came down over the mountains with a pack containing pocket-knives, razors, soap, perfumery, laces, and other curious wares, and besought our people to purchase. We have not much coin, but were disposed to treat him Christianly, until he did declare that President General Santa Aña, whom may the saints defend! was a thief and gambler, and had gambled away the Province of California to the United States; whereupon we drove him hence, the Ayuntamiento sending a trusty guard to see him two leagues from the borders of the Pueblo. But months after, we discovered his pack and such of his poor bones as the wild beasts of prey had not carried off, at the base of a precipice where he had fallen. His few remains and his goods were together buried on the mountain-side, and I lamented that we had been so hard with him. But the saints forbid that he should go back and tell where the people of San Ildefonso were waiting to hear from their own neglectful country, which may Heaven defend, bless, and prosper."

The little town took on a new interest to us cold outsiders after hearing its strange and almost improbable story. We could have scarcely believed that San Ildefonso had actually been overlooked in the transfer of the country from Mexico to the United States, and had for nearly forty years been hidden away between the Sierra and the sea; but if we were disposed to doubt the word of the good father, here was intrinsic evidence of the truth of his narrative. There were no Americans here: only the remnants of the old Mexican occupation and the civilized Indians. No traces of later civilization could be found; but the simple dresses, tools, implements of husbandry, and household utensils were such as I have seen in the half-civilized wilds of Central America. The old mill in the cañon behind the town was a curiosity of clumsiness, and nine-tenths of the water-power of the arroya that supplied it were wasted. Besides, until now, who ever heard of such a town in California as San Ildefonso? Upon what map can any such headland and bay be traced? and where are the historic records of the pueblo whose well-defined boundaries lay palpably before us? I have dwelt upon this point, about which I naturally have some feeling, because of the sceptical criticism which my narrative has since provoked. There are some people in the world who never will believe anything that they have not seen, touched, or tasted for themselves; California has her share of such.

Captain Booden was disposed to reject Father

Ignacio's story, until I called his attention to the fact that this was a tolerable harbor for small craft, and yet had never before been heard of ; that he never knew of such a town, and that if any of his numerous associates in the marine profession knew of the town or harbor of San Ildefonso, he surely would have heard of it from them. He restrained his impatience to be off long enough to allow Father Ignacio to gather from us a few chapters of the world's history for forty years past. The discovery of gold in California, the settlement of the country and the Pacific Railroad were not so much account to him, somehow, as the condition of Europe, the Church of Mexico, and what had become of the Pious Fund ; this last I discovered had been a worrisome subject to the good Father. I did not know what it was myself, but I believe it was the alienation from the church of certain moneys and incomes which were transferred to speculators by the Mexican Congress, years and years ago.

I was glad to find that we were more readily believed by Father Ignacio and the old Don than our Yankee predecessor had been ; perhaps we were believed more on his corroborative evidence. The priest, however, politely declined to believe all we said—that was evident ; and the Don steadily refused to believe that California had been transferred to the United States. It was a little touching to see Father Ignacio's doubt and hopes struggle in his withered face as he heard in a few brief sentences the history of his beloved land and Church

for forty years past. His eye kindled or it was bedewed with tears as he listened, and an occasional flash of resentment flushed his cheek when he heard something that shook his ancient faith in the established order of things. To a proposition to take a passage with us to San Francisco, he replied warmly that he would on no account leave his flock, nor attempt to thwart the manifest will of Heaven that the town should remain unheard of until delivered from its long sleep by the same agencies that had cut it off from the rest of the world. Neither would he allow any of the people to come with us.

And so we parted. We went out with the turn of the tide, Father Ignacio and the Ancient accompanying us to the beach, followed by a crowd of the townsfolk, who carried for us water and provisions for a longer voyage than ours promised to be. The venerable priest raised his hands in parting blessing as we shoved off, and I saw two big tears roll down the furrowed face of Señor Maldonado, who looked after us as a stalwart old warrior might look at the departure of a band of hopeful comrades leaving him to fret in monkish solitude while they were off to the wars again. Wind and tide served, and in a few minutes the Lively Polly rounded the point, and looking back, I saw the yellow haze of the afternoon sun sifted sleepily over all the place; the knots of white-clad people standing statuesque and motionless as they gazed; the flag of Mexico faintly waving in the air; and with a sigh of relief a slumbrous veil seemed to fall over all the scene:

and as our boat met the roll of the current outside the headland, the gray rocks of the point shut out the fading view, and we saw the last of San Ildefonso.

Captain Booden had gathered enough from the people to know that we were somewhere south of San Francisco (the Lively Polly had no chart or nautical instruments on board of course), and so he determined to coast cautiously along northward, marking the shore line in order to be able to guide other navigators to the harbor. But a light mist crept down the coast, shutting out the view of the headlands, and by midnight we had stretched out to sea again, and we were once more out of our reckoning. At daybreak, however, the fog lifted, and we found ourselves in sight of land, and a brisk breeze blowing, we soon made Pigeon Point, and before noon were inside the Golden Gate, and ended our long and adventurous cruise from Bolinas Bay by hauling into the wharf of San Francisco.

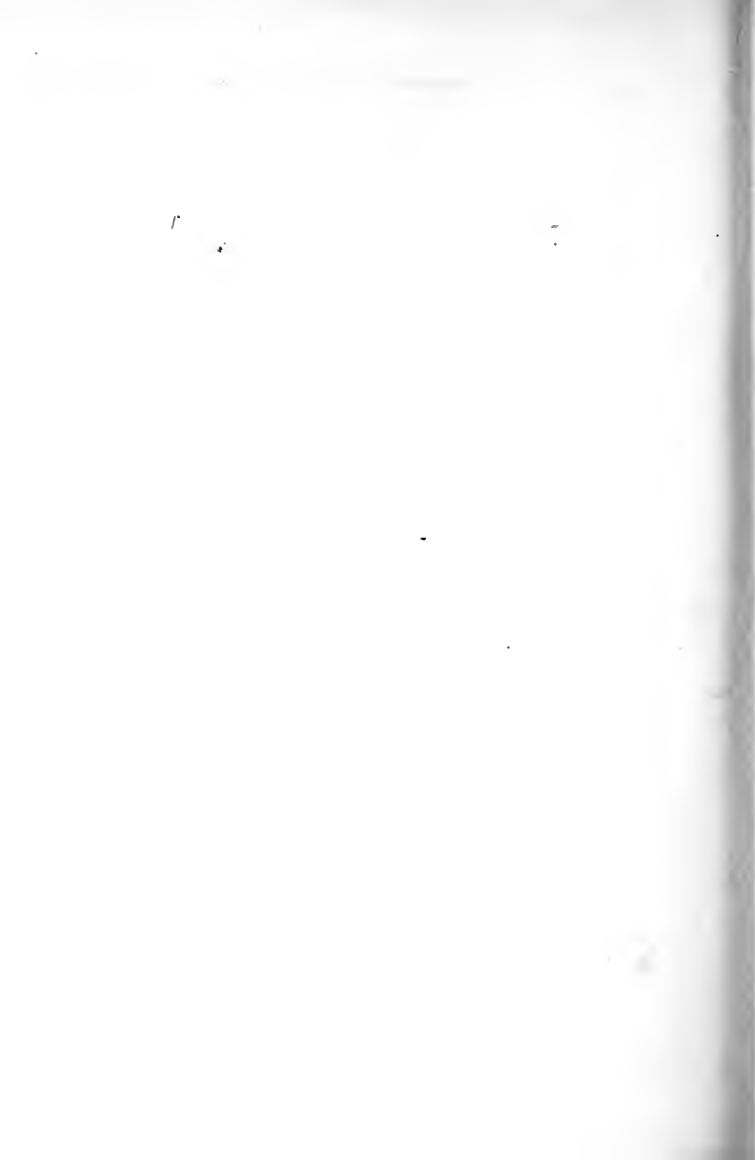
I have little left to tell. Of the shameful way in which our report was received, every newspaper reader knows. At first there were some persons, men of science and reading, who were disposed to believe what we said. I printed in one of the daily newspapers an account of what we had discovered, giving a full history of San Ildefonso as Father Ignacio had given it to us. Of course, as I find is usual in such cases, the other newspapers pooh-poohed the story their contemporary had published to their exclusion, and made themselves very

merry over what they were pleased to term "The Great San Ildefonso Sell." I prevailed on Captain Booden to make a short voyage down the coast in search of the lost port. But we never saw the headland, the ridge beyond the town, nor anything that looked like these landmarks, though we went down as far as San Pedro Bay and back twice or three times. It actually did seem that the whole locality had been swallowed up, or had vanished into air. In vain did I bring the matter to the notice of the merchants and scientific men of San Francisco. Nobody would fit out an exploring expedition by land or sea; those who listened at first finally inquired "if there was any money in it?" I could not give an affirmative answer, and they turned away with the discouraging remark that the California Academy of Natural Science and the Society of Pioneers were the only bodies interested in the fate of our lost city. Even Captain Booden somehow lost all interest in the enterprise, and returned to his Bolinas coasting with the most stolid indifference. I combated the attacks of the newspapers with facts and depositions of my fellow-voyagers as long as I could, until one day the editor of the Daily Trumpeter (I suppress the real name of the sheet) coldly told me that the public were tired of the story of San Ildefonso. It was plain that his mind had been soured by the sarcasms of his contemporaries, and he no longer believed in me.

The newspaper controversy died away and was forgotten, but I have never relinquished the hope

of proving the verity of my statements. At one time I expected to establish the truth, having heard that one Zedekiah Murch had known a Yankee peddler who had gone over the mountains of Santa Cruz and never was heard of more. But Zedekiah's memory was feeble, and he only knew that such a story prevailed long ago; so that clue was soon lost again, and the little fire of enthusiasm which it had kindled among a few persons died out. I have not yet lost all hope; and when I think of the regretful conviction that will force itself upon the mind of good Father Ignacio, that we were, after all, impostors, I cannot bear to reflect that I may die and visit the lost town of San Ildefonso no more.





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